

0 M A R I A M N E;

O R,

IRISH ANECDOTES.

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

ASHTON PRIORY, BENEDICTA, POWIS CASTLE, &c.

V O L. I.

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M A R I A M N E;

OR,

IRISH ANECDOTES.

C H A P. I.

WHEN, in the ardour of sincere affliction for the loss of the best of husbands, Lady Derrick retired from the gay world, to devote the remainder of her days to retirement, it was often a subject of tender, though secret, regret to her, that she was blest with no offspring, whose filial endearments might beguile her heavy hours.—“ But I have children, (said she to herself,) and ample scope is still afforded me for the exercise of the social affections;—my poor tenants are my children,—as such, at least, I will regard them; and, in kindest acts of beneficence to them, this half-broken heart

shall forget its sorrows.—Oh, ye benevolent feelings—glorious emanations of supreme perfections ! surely ye are interwoven in the heart of man, to smoothe his passage through this vale of tears, and scatter roses over the path of life.”

With such benign sentiments, Lady Derrick arrived at her castle ; and, as she had suggested, ample scope was indeed afforded for the exercise of the best emotions of the heart. The people of her village and its vicinity were manifestly sunk into the extreme of wretchedness, yet the miserable hut in which the naked cottagers and half-starved cattle crowded indiscriminately together, exhibited but a faint picture of the poverty and disorder of their mental condition. Ignorance, profound as Egyptian darkness, brooded over the faculties of the rational soul, and the grossest superstition awed it with her iron rod.—Lady Derrick wept when she saw so considerable a number of intelligent beings reduced to so ignoble a condition.

“ Where (said she to Dr. Alford) can we trace in these poor creatures any thing of man’s original superiority to the rest of the creation ? ”

“ I wish, Madam, (he replied,) that the Irish peasantry were the only people in whom these noble characters are lost : but, to the disgrace of human nature, I am forced
to

to confess, that all civilized countries seem too much disposed to consider the poor as a different species of beings from themselves."

"It should not be so, (cried her ladyship;) there is a fault somewhere."

"We can, however, Madam, resumed he, prevent its being found with us. Tomorrow I design to enter on the work your ladyship's benevolence hath assigned me; and as there will at least be something of novelty in the scheme, I doubt not of seeing my lectures as crowded as those of the ancient philosophers were."

"You do not intend (smiling) to make philosophy the subject of them."

"Yes, Madam, the christian philosophy; and I know of no system so well adapted to humanize and exalt our natures."

"How happens it then, Sir, that the sermons of our divines have not more generally that effect?"

"Because, my lady, they favour more of the porch or lyceum than the christian school; and it might as well be asked, why the enlightened sages of antiquity did not make all their countrymen as refined as themselves? The truth is, Madam, to be enabled to admire virtue with a view to moral fitness, pre-supposes some advancement in mental refinement, which is the reason why the science of ethics can never

be interesting to vulgar minds. But where philosophy fails, christianity triumphs; this alone is capable of working on the ignorance and prejudice of mankind. I am convinced, therefore, that if we would wish our sermons to be of general utility, we must first be careful to make our auditors christians."

Just as Dr. Alford had finished his remarks, Lady Derrick's steward came into the room to congratulate her ladyship's arrival, and also to request that she would exert her authority in settling an affair which had set the parish in commotion. "'Tis only, an' please your ladyship, about a poor friendless child, added he, whom nobody cares to provide for——"

"What child do you mean?" said the lady.

"One who was wrecked hard by a few weeks since."

"Let me hear particulars, John."

"Why your ladyship must know, that we had lately one of the dreadfulest storms I ever heard in my life. Oh, 'twas such a night. So, as I was saying, there was a vessel stranded on our coast: where she came from, or whither bound, nobody knows. Next morning our neighbours put off their boats to come in for plunder, and I among them; but I assure your ladyship, it was not to share with them, but only to see

see what was to be seen. It seemed to me as though I heard a child cry. I listened; heard it again; but not a soul durst venture into the wreck, which seemed going to the bottom every minute. At last I took heart myself,—got in.—Mercy on me, I shall never forget it;—there lay the prettiest infant in the world lashed to a woman who was dead and stiff: no doubt but the falling in of a plank had killed her. However the baby was alive. I took it up in my arms, came ashore, and carried her (for it is a girl) to my sister Deborah: and so, my Lady, the story is, that all the parish are about my ears, because I brought them, as they say, a child to maintain.”

Lady Derrick gave immediate orders for the child to be brought to the castle. In about ten minutes the honest old steward returned with a lovely female infant in his arms, apparently about a year and a half old.

“And is this (cried Dr. Alford, with swimming eyes) the poor friendless being to whom nobody allows a shelter? I will take thee, sweet babe, to my house, and thou shalt be my daughter.”

“You will, Sir! (cried Lady Derrick, in a pleasant tone.) Vastly polite to monopolize the right of choice when a lady is present. I tell you, Sir, she shall be my daughter.”

daughter. I am childless; you are blest with a son."

She then took the babe in her arms, pressed it to her bosom, and dropped a tear on its face. The infant looked up and smiled; and that smile enkindled so strong a sentiment of affection in the benevolent heart of Lady Derrick, as no time or chance could ever afterwards extinguish.

"This child henceforth is mine," resumed she.

The Doctor requested that at least he might be allowed to stand godfather to it; "for I presume (added he) it is our duty to bestow on it the rite of baptism."

To this her Ladyship agreed, and the infant was baptized by the name of MARIAMNE, which was that of Lady Derrick herself.—The steward then proceeded to inform his Lady, that the woman they had found dead had been decently buried, and that he had taken care of a small picture which she had tied about her neck. This picture Lady Derrick carefully locked up in her escutoir, and then committed the little Mariamne to the care of the housekeeper, with a strict injunction to be careful of her precious charge; "for who knows, Juxton, (said her Ladyship,) but this sweet friendless babe may hereafter prove the comfort of my aged heart."

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

LADY DERRICK was descended from one of the most ancient families in Ireland, on which her many excellent qualities reflected the truest lustre; for she was through life respected and beloved much more for her own personal merit than illustrious birth. The elevated understanding with which nature had endowed her, was improved by every assistance which education could bestow. Her youth she had passed alternately in England and France; and at her return to her native kingdom was both by the advantages of person and mind calculated to shine with eclat in the circle of the Irish nobility. Attractions so uncommon could not but have an extensive effect on the sensibility of the gentlemen. Lord Derrick, however, was the possessor of her affections, as in due time he became of her charming person.

person. Of all others, this nobleman was most deserving of her choice; and for the space of five years she enjoyed in the conjugal state that refined felicity which virtue, sense, and sweetness of temper could create. Their nuptials were crowned with a son, who, to the deep affliction of his fond parents, died of the small-pox just as he had attained his third year. A more severe stroke, however, was in reserve for her Ladyship, who shortly after lost the best of husbands; and though not more than thirty at the time of Lord Derrick's decease, her affections were so sincerely buried in his tomb, that she took the resolution of retiring from the world, which was now become to her a dreary vacuum. With a determination, which she never violated, of avoiding a second marriage, she chose for the place of her retirement a castle belonging to the family towards the southern extremity of the kingdom, in which venerable mansion the reader has now found her Ladyship residing.

Lady Derrick, at this time, was near the verge of three score, nor since the death of her Lord had mingled with the gay world, except as affairs occasionally called her for a few weeks to the capital: not that in her retreat she affected a monastic solitude, or had any thing in her temper calculated to form the gloomy recluse; on the contrary, she

she was the most social of beings, and never felt her happiness so complete as when contributing to that of society. Of a disposition naturally cheerful, her domestic scenes were lively, though subservient to the most perfect order; nor in her most solitary hours was it possible she could ever feel the pressure of ennui, for the polite arts were her delight, and a taste for literature a distinguishing trait in her character. But that which constituted the chief business of her life was a liberal scheme she had set on foot, of civilizing the peasantry in that part of the kingdom; and the extent of many miles round her seat bore a pleasing testimony to the success of her benevolent measures; agriculture and the useful arts were there seen to flourish; the cottages no longer wore the appearance of wretchedness; but taught to value the privileges, and to relish the enjoyments of social life, their possessors were comfortable and happy; in a word, they were exalted in the scale of beings, and felt themselves men.

But, though those enlarged views had their rise in her ladyship's cultivated and liberal mind, she could not have been enabled to effect that beneficent plan, had she not fortunately formed an acquaintance with the worthy divine we have mentioned in the former chapter, by whose activity and virtues she saw her wishes daily receiving satisfactory

tisfactory accomplishment. Dr. Alford was an English divine, but of so liberal a turn of sentiment, that, despising the distinctions of sect which obtain among protestants, his ambition was to appear, and really to be, a christian, in the largest sense of the word. Till her Ladyship's acquaintance with this gentleman, she had been, as all her family were before her, of the Romish communion, though not of that order of beings who implicitly swallow every absurdity which that church may teach: she had her doubts as to the absolute holiness or authority of St. Peter's successor, and indeed on some other points. The fact was, Lady Derrick had learnt to view mankind with the eye of a philosopher; and as in a life so much devoted to letters, it is natural to suppose religious, as well as other subjects, would pass her investigation, so she had assumed the liberty of thinking for herself, in spite of the restraints of priestcraft; and, by a consequence not uncommon to more than ordinary penetration, in persons of that communion, was sinking apace into deism, when the following incident introduced Dr. Alford to her knowledge.

Happening to be at Dublin during some part of a most inclement winter, she accidentally fell into company with that gentleman, and was much struck by the benevolent warmth with which he represented the
the

the sufferings of a certain distressed family, recommending their case so forcibly to the humanity of his auditors, that every heart was disposed to render them assistance.

"Do you know, Sir, (said a catholic priest, invidiously,) that the persons you describe are not protestants."

"I do, Sir, (replied the Doctor;) but it is sufficient for me to know that they are partakers of the same nature with myself."

"Ah, what pity (with a sigh) that such goodness of heart were not exalted to its just value by a communion with the true church."

"I trust, Sir, I am in communion with the christian church at large, and value no other distinction."

The Doctor's sentiments seemed to turn on so liberal a scale, as interested Lady Derrick much in favour of his character; and, however the rest of the company approve a charity of such extensive latitude, she from that moment determined on cultivating his acquaintance.

Dr. Alford was not only a person of the warmest benevolence, but of profound erudition also; and though he avoided polemical controversy, yet when a defence of his opinions, as a protestant, was expedient, his reasons were cogent, and his arguments conclusive. At once liberal in his ideas; abundantly able to set before her Ladyship

the christian doctrine in all its native and simple beauty ;—divested of superstition and error, she saw it adorned with all the force of truth, and adapted both to the moral and intellectual powers of the human mind ;—subservient, therefore, to the dictates of right reason, Lady Derrick from that time became a protestant.

On this occasion, the practicability of the scheme which she had long meditated, respecting the civilization of her tenants and neighbours, occurred most forcibly to her mind. Dr. Alford, of all men, was the best qualified to facilitate such a measure ; and fortunately, also, his situation in life was such as made it no hard task to prevail with him to engage in the work.

An utter stranger to the art of preferment-hunting, he had never, with all that professional, as well as personal merit he possessed, been able to acquire any considerable share of ecclesiastical property. — Accepting, therefore, her Ladyship's proposal, he, with an amiable wife, retired to the village in which the castle was, and entered on his pastoral labours, at once the pious minister and friend of his people. Soon were the consequences happily apparent ; the understandings of the ignorant were cultivated, and of course the moral virtues expanded in their hearts. In fine, they were no longer brutes, but rational and social

social beings, enjoying a degree of happiness of which they before had not even the conception. Encouraged by the bounty of Lady Derrick, and instructed by their intelligent pastor, they cultivated the useful arts of life, and applied themselves so successfully to the study of rural economy, that in a short time plenty and comfort were diffused throughout those habitations which had formerly been the seats of indigence, and every species of misery.

The Doctor was now grown old in his honourable retirement, beloved, nay almost adored by his parishioners. During the many years he had resided among them, it had been his misfortune to lose his amiable lady, who left one son, at this time a most promising child of about three years old.

C H A P. III.

THE compilers of this history judge it expedient to pass over a period of about six years immediately succeeding the event recorded in our first chapter; for, though the little Mariamne will probably make no inconsiderable figure in these memoirs, we know of nothing during that time worthy of notice, except that, as she first engaged the affections of Lady Derrick by her distress and infant sufferings, so she daily continued to improve the tender tie; as reason gradually opened, she discovered an acuteness of understanding, strong sensibility, and great sweetness of temper, insomuch that a sensation, which at first was pity in her Ladyship, by degrees assumed the nature of maternal love. On the other hand, the child, accustomed to consider her benefactress as a parent, really loved her as such.

Lady Derrick would often say, "There wanted but this dear creature to complete my

my happiness, and I will not be ungrateful for the boon." Sometimes, in a jocular strain, she would tell the good Doctor, that she intended some time to make up a match between Mariamne and his son. "And if you do, Madam, (he would reply in the same strain,) you will be only making the restitution you owe, for defrauding me of her to whom I had a prior right."

Hitherto all went on smoothly with regard to our fair foundling, nor was it supposed the share she enjoyed in her noble patroness's esteem, could be thought inimical to the interest of any; but, as increasing years pointed her out as more an object of general attention, her story, with all its attendant circumstances, became a more important topic of animadversion, particularly to one whose mercenary fears were awakened thereby.

Lady Derrick had a brother, whose character was in every respect the reverse of her own;—of an understanding narrow by nature, but still more contracted by bigotry. Mr. O'Brien had never forgiven his sister the crime of renouncing popery, to which he adhered with a zeal proportioned to the limitation of his intellectual abilities. Since that event he had resentfully avoided the remotest intercourse with her, and never was heard to mention her name, but with the epithets of heretic and apostate. Im-
B 3 portant,

portant, however, as he deemed this consideration, there was now another which disputed weight with it. Lady Derrick had an almost immense fortune entirely at her own disposal; and notwithstanding the coolness long subsisting between them, he had no doubt but that family pride would induce her to bequeath the whole of it to her nephew, his son, although the boy was never permitted to visit her; but now the case was somewhat altered; her known attachment to Marianne was become a subject of serious uneasiness to him. His being already extremely rich, and having but that one child, was nothing to the purpose: avarice was his predominant passion; and, as long as there was wealth in the family, he would have thought himself wretched without a prospect of enjoying it, at least in the future acquisition of his heir. In the anxiety of his heart, he unbosomed himself to Father le Jullier, his confessor, that is to say, the sole director of his conscience, will, and opinions. The priest, after hearing him disclose the subject of his present apprehensions, sternly demanded of him what better could be expected from one who had apostatized to an heretical communion. — “Has she not, continued he, renounced her faith, and could you be weak enough to imagine she would be bound by the ties of consanguinity?”

But

"But the pride of blood, Father, I supposed would have prompted such regard to the honour of her own family."

"Then you should have encouraged that pride by a familiar intercourse."

"Surely Father le Jellier cannot have forgotten, that in treating my sister with all possible neglect, I acted in conformity to his counsels."

"That is true;—as a good son of the church, you are bound to hate, curse, and as far as practicable, destroy all who are enemies to her authority; yet you might have entertained those just sentiments, and at the same time have prosecuted your own temporal advantage: in other words, it would have been lawful for you to have affected so much of brotherly affection as would have been sufficient to detain her in your interest. Oh, (grinding his teeth,) had we the management of this obstinate, perverse heretic in countries where our Holy Mother sits on her proper throne! but here (groaning) she is levelled with the dust."

"Aye, Father, I would it were so; but the question is, what can be done as the case now stands?"

"Let me see, (pausing;) do you think she has made a will in favour of the little wretch you have mentioned?"

"I hope not."

"If

"If we could be certain she has not, it would be the most prudent way to get her put aside before she takes that step; as in case she dies intestate, you will succeed to the whole."

"A glorious thought, could we be assured of that point; but as it is extremely probable Lady Derrick might already have made such a will as I fear, would it not be policy to endeavour the giving her prejudices another vent?"

"Unquestionably.—But how is that to be effected?"

"That is the very point I meant to refer to your wisdom, Father."

"Doubtless, at all events, you must be reconciled to your sister,—at least apparently."

"But I have carried myself so implacably towards her these ten years——"

"No matter—I will bring it about—it must be so—and when we have gained thus far, something more effectual may be done—leave it wholly to me."

C H A P. IV.

SOME days after the above event, Lady Derrick was taking an evening walk in a favourite wood near the castle, accompanied by Mariamne and her maid. Seated in a forest-chair beneath the branches of a spreading oak, she made her little darling repeat some verses she had been taught, and was listening to her engaging accents, when her attention was called off by the voice of some person in distress. It seemed to proceed from a thicket at no great distance; and following the sound with her usual sensations of benevolent sympathy, her Ladyship discovered a man lying upon the ground, apparently in great agony. After viewing him for a couple of minutes, she exclaimed with compassion and surprise, "Bless me, it is Father le Jellier. Surely I am not deceived. What unfortunate accident——"

Here

Here the Father (for it was he) uttered a groan of anguish, requesting her to permit some of her people to assist him; for, having lost his way in the wood, his horse had taken fright, and thrown him with such violence that he feared he could have only a few minutes to live.

Some of the men-servants of the family happening to come by at that instant, the priest was immediately conveyed to the castle, where he experienced that humane attention which so often marked the character of Lady Derrick, who, in her tender concern for the suffering of others, knew not the distinctions of nations or religion.

'Tis true that few or no bruises could be discovered about the Father; nevertheless he declared that the hurt he had received was of an internal kind, "and such (added he, in a faint voice) as at my advanced age cannot but be mortal. I feel indeed that death cannot be far off, and I bow submissive to the stroke. To him who has been accustomed to live in the constant meditation on his last hour, death can never be untimely. Yet, Madam, one favour, if not improper, I would ask."

"Speak your wishes, Father le Jellier, and be assured, if it is in my power to effect any thing for your ease or satisfaction, it shall not be omitted."

"Your brother, Madam—would you con-

condescend to allow him the satisfaction of seeing me before I die; or otherwise, let me be speedily conveyed to his house, that I may breathe my last in his presence."

"I fear, my good Father, it would not be proper to remove you in your present situation. I will send for my brother, who surely cannot believe my doors were ever shut against him."

The father expressed much satisfaction at her Ladyship's condescension, and was soon after removed into bed, where the steward and another of the men-servants watched carefully by him the remainder of the night. Lady Derrick having diligently dispatched a messenger to Mr. Obrien, with an account of le Jellier's situation and ardent desire of seeing him. That gentleman was at the castle very early on the next morning; but, although she had ever retained a sincere good-will towards a brother who had treated her unnaturally, she wished to avoid an interview which must have been embarrassing to both. However, Mr. Obrien having been some time alone with le Jellier, the latter sent a servant to her Ladyship, requesting the honour of her presence. Such a message occasioned some little commotion in her bosom. Could she have been assured that the heart of Obrien was as free from rancour as her own, she would not have hesitated a moment in making

king the first overtures of reconciliation; but his former conduct had manifested the contrary: yet, in compliance with the request of Father le Jellier, she determined on the interview. Mr. O'Brien, on her entrance, forced his countenance into an air of good-humour, but through it appeared the malice of an implacable heart. Le Jellier raising himself in the bed at her approach, took her Ladyship's hand, and joined it with that of her brother. "Forgive me, Madam, (said he,) if in my last moments I am solicitous to unite two persons, whose affections should never have been divided. I conjure you both, as you hope for forgiveness, to be reconciled to each other."

Lady Derrick wept audibly; O'Brien kissed the hand, which he still held, and with a sigh articulated the word *Sister*. The unsocial spell was now broken; her feeling heart melted at the endearing term; and repeating the words "Dear brother," she sobbed her ineffable sensations on his bosom.

"Now (cried the Father) I die in peace. Blessed hour—glorious death, which has thus been the means of reuniting the children of one father in the bonds of love. But say is this reconciliation cordial? Do you mutually and from the bottom of your souls forgive?"

"I have never borne my brother the
least

least resentment, (replied Lady Derrick,) nor do I know any just cause I have given him for displeasure."

Obrien hesitating for a reply, Le Jellier answered for him. "The displeasure he might have conceived towards you, my Lady, was rather a proof of the sincerity of his regard for you : as a good and tender brother, he could not with unconcern behold you hazarding your salvation."

"It was that, my dear sister, (rejoined Obrien,) and that alone, which induced me ever to behave with coldness towards you ; and, oh, that I could now embrace you as returned to the bosom of our Holy Mother."

"Be satisfied (replied she) with allowing me that liberty of conscience which I have not attempted to disturb you in the enjoyment of ; and suffer me to observe, brother, that the law of nature being co-equal with the existence of mankind, those distinctions in religion which are comparatively of yesterday cannot disannul it."

The determined air with which this reply was given, sufficiently convinced both that nothing farther could falsely be urged on the subject ; the Father therefore resumed, "I am convinced, Madam, your brother means to restore you all his affection unconditionally, since your moral excellencies are sufficient to command all love and reve-

rence, independent of any other consideration."

We will stop here to observe, that no sooner were matters thus placed on an amicable footing between the brother and sister, than Father le Jellier began visibly to recover from the alarming effects of his late accident, which Lady Derrick with her usual candour attributed to the satisfaction he professed to feel in the success of his reconciliatory endeavours, but we who are in possession of the secret, think ourselves bound to declare, that the good priest was really in as sound a condition of body as at any former period of his life, the whole affair being a mere fabrication, devised for the purpose of effecting a reconciliation between Obrien and his sister, as the ground-work of the pecuniary scheme they were now to proceed on.

To render this reconciliation more complete, and evince the satisfaction of all parties, the coach was dispatched for Mrs. Obrien, who being in some measure in the secret, lost no time in joining the company at the castle. This lady was in every respect suited to become the partner of Mr. Obrien, weak, illiterate, proud and avaricious: in proportion to the narrowness of her intellect, she was conceited and insincere; dissimulation marked every part of her conduct, where self-interest was concerned;

cerned; and the whole compass of her ideas comprised only such a knowledge of mankind, as is sufficient to form a selfish and deceitful character. Lady Derrick had ever been the object of her hatred, not so much on the score of being a protestant, as for those many excellencies of character which gave her a decided superiority; and though now called on to act a part she was far from realizing, yet her expressions of affection to this amiable sister-in-law were so extravagantly expressed, that an unconcerned spectator of the scene must have doubted the sincerity of them. Lady Derrick, indeed, had too much sagacity to give credit for the whole of this violent regard, yet she had charity enough to believe the reconciliation as sincere on the other side as her own, and therefore cordially invited her brother and his lady to pass a week or two at the castle; to which they readily assented: and Father le Jellier being now declared out of danger, a general satisfaction of good-humour pervaded all parties.

Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien, agreeable to the rules of sound policy, thought proper to be utterly ignorant of there being such a person as Mariamne; when, therefore, that engaging child made her appearance, they with much apparent simplicity demanded who the sweet creature was.

“A poor unfortunate, (returned Lady Derrick,)

Derrick,) whom shipwreck threw into my arms for protection."

She then related to them the circumstances of that tempestuous night; on which Le Jallier exclaimed, "How amiable—how divinely lovely is the benevolence which knows not the prejudices of consanguinity, and is superior to the ties of blood!"

"You have acted like yourself, (rejoined Obrien;) this was an action worthy of my sister."

Generous minds are hardly brought to suspect that baseness in others of which themselves are unconscious. It was for this reason that her Ladyship observed not the ironical satire which lurked under both these replies; nor was it indeed intended she should.

Mrs. Obrien took Mariamne in her arms, and almost smothered her with kisses.—

"Charming creature! (cried she;) how should I idolize such a companion. Will you go and live with me, my little angel?"

"No, Madam, (answered Mariamne,) I cannot leave my dear good mamma."—

At the same time she ran towards Lady Derrick, who received her with a maternal embrace.

Indeed, sister, (resumed Mrs. Obrien, smiling to conceal the pangs of jealousy,) I must either beg or steal this sweet child from you. What say you, madam, will you

you give me leave to act the part of a fond mother to her?"

"That pleasing task, dear sister, (smiling,) has been assigned to me. I cannot properly depute it to any one else."

"Shall we make a temporary exchange then, my Lady? you shall sometimes have our Augustus in lieu of your Mariamne."

"My nephew, sister, will be always welcome to me, though I should not agree to part with my little girl, who at present must duly attend the masters I have provided her with."

And indeed her Ladyship had been extremely careful in that point: Mariamne was regularly attended by the best masters in the several arts of music, dancing, writing, and the modern languages; her godfather, the Doctor, taking care that her education should not be a superficial one, which, while it bestows what are deemed elegant accomplishments, too often leaves the mind uninformed of all those species of useful knowledge which are necessary to its true happiness and advantageous with respect to society.

These attainments, together with a pretty person, winning manners, and the sweetest temper in the world, rendered our heroine a most interesting object: even Mrs. Olivia thought her such, though, with all the fondness she expressed for her, she secretly bore

her an irreconcilable malice, as the rival of her own son, in the affections of his aunt.

No sooner was this artful woman alone with her husband, than she asked him what he thought of his sister's conduct towards Mariamne; to which he replied, "My sister is a fond doating fool; and I foresee that this girl will supplant our son in every respect. But that was an excellent manoeuvre of your's, my dear, in so ingeniously attempting to get the little wretch from her."

"I see my dear, (smiling,) you penetrated my design; but though I am now repulsed, I don't despair of one day gaining my point."

"Never;—my sister is too long-headed for that; I even suspect she has some notion of your motive already."

"Impossible, Sir;—you over-rate her Ladyship's discernment; she is not the sagacious person you suppose, believe me: as a proof of it, who but a weak woman, like herself, would have received you so cordially after the many slights and affronts you have been shewing her these ten years: nay, at this minute I am convinced she believes we have forgotten all, and are actuated by the warmest regard for her."

"I am not certain, my dear, but all this has arisen from a mode of thinking peculiar

to Lady Derrick. She has not, I am persuaded, been insensible to our conduct; nor is this the first time I have known her overlook an injury, and even repay it with kindness. Take care, therefore, that you do not over-act your part: she is not so blind, I believe, as she chuses to appear."

"Let me alone to manage her, Sir—Whatever opinion you may entertain of her abilities, I engage to outwit her; nay, to foil her at her own weapons."

"As how, my dear?"

"No matter;—you shall see in the long

C H A P. V.

THE Obriens having by this well concerted visit placed matters on such a footing as yielded sufficient gratification to their interested views, began to talk of returning home. Father le Jellier, in order to complete the business, had been diligent in cultivating a personal intimacy with Dr. Alford. This was by no means a difficult task, as the Doctor was extremely free of access; add to which, though he possessed all the sagacity requisite to form a prudent character, he was an entire stranger to mean distrust, and never suffered his social amity to be interrupted by suspicions before indubitable facts had sufficiently warranted them; it may therefore be supposed, that he discovered no reluctance to an acquaintance with Le Jellier, who could on occasions be polite, frank, and agreeable. They walked, rode, and coursed together. Alford was fond of his dog and gun; Le Jellier

Jellier, though no sportsman, felt pleasure in accompanying him. In these excursions Le Jellier could not affect insensibility of the improved state of agriculture in that part of the kingdom; and as he well knew the Doctor merited much applause on that score, he concluded there would be no likelier means of ingratiating himself into his esteem, than by paying due compliments thereon. Truth, for once, was synonymous to panegyric. Le Jellier, though aiming at flattery, could not here be guilty of it; and the Doctor received the handsome things uttered on the occasion with the air of one who disclaimed a larger share of approbation than was justly his due.

"I see with satisfaction, Sir, (said he,) the improved condition of the peasantry around us; and I consider it as the reward of the laudable zeal with which Lady Derrick has laboured to promote it. I am no more than an agent in the grand scheme of her benevolence; her's is the honour of the plan, as well as of its success; she has been at a vast expence in awakening the industry and conquering the prejudices of these poor people."

"Her Ladyship is a good woman, a valuable woman, (returned Le Jellier;) but still, Doctor, much of the success must be ascribed to you. This improved state of society indicates a degree of mental cultivation,

tivation, which I must suppose wholly the result of your own labours."

"Even here, my good Father, her Ladyship takes the precedence. Aware that the human mind must become conscious of its own dignity e'er any thing great or valuable be excited therein, she established a free-school, where youth of both sexes were admitted for instruction in reading and writing, by which means the neighbourhood was provided with a race of intelligent beings, ready to adopt such methods of social improvement as her liberality was always ready to encourage. Besides this, there was an academy open to persons of a more advanced age, to whom the principles of morality were clearly explained, and so much of the useful sciences taught, as their capacities were able to receive. Thus society gradually assumed a more pleasing aspect; the manners of our peasants were changed from ferocity to social mildness; their intercourse with each other was attended by all those happy effects which accompany the due exercise of the moral virtues. In fine, they became good neighbours, husbands, brothers, fathers, and found their happiness in the mutual exchange of the relative duties; the moral faculties expanded, industry was awakened, and the arts of social life cultivated with a success which introduced plenty, cleanliness, and comfort, into the cottages

cottages of the poor, where formerly nothing but wretchedness was to be found. Thus, Sir, it is that Lady Derrick, as far at least as her influence extends, has been enabled to change the character of her countrymen; and you must be convinced, that without such previous cultivation of the mental powers, it would never have been possible to conquer those prejudices which ignorance and habit establish, nor to have overcome the indolence which ever accompanies a degraded condition of the human intellect."

"Your plan, Doctor, (replied Le Jellier,) is unquestionably a benevolent one; but, though you must rank high as a philosopher, I much question whether you will be entitled to the applause of politicians."

"And why that exception, Father le Jellier?"

"Because it is, I think, an axiom in wise governments, that a too great diffusion of knowledge is not always friendly to order."

"To slavery, you mean, (a little warmly.) Sir, I would always suspect the honesty of that legislator, who should be averse to the community being properly enlightened."

"Properly enlightened? If by that term you mean, Doctor, such a knowledge of their duty as is sufficient to render them good subjects, I entirely agree with you; but

but if your ideas of enlightening comprehend that knowledge which teaches men to soar beyond their proper sphere, and by consequence tends to licentiousness and disorder, I must avow my dissent."

In this reply the Doctor could not but perceive the true spirit of the Roman hierarchy. He, however, chose not to enter the lists with it, but in character of a mere politician resumed,—

"Pray, Father, what, in your opinion, is the grand end of government? Is it that the pleasure of being feared and obeyed by millions, should be the exclusive right of one man? or do you suppose it instituted for the safety, protection, and welfare of the social body?"

Le Jellier's principles certainly inclined to the former proposition; yet not deeming it prudent on that occasion to avow them, he hesitatingly replied,—

"The latter."

"Very well, (resumed the Doctor,) it then follows that kings and civil magistrates are the guardians of their people's rights, and the executors of those laws by which they agree to bind themselves for the preservation of the general and individual well-being; it is therefore necessary that the people should understand the nature of those social rights of which they appoint a guardian,

dian, and the expediency of those laws to which they bind themselves to submit; and this, it appears to me, is the best and only foundation of happiness and order in the state. Men will not be inclined to rebel against an authority which secures them the enjoyment of all that is valuable in life: but when their minds are suffered to sink so far beneath the scale of rationality as to become ignorant of what is really valuable to them as social beings, they may be expected to become the tools of faction, and insensible to the blessings of the best constitution. Thus, Sir, it seems clear, to me at least, that the likeliest method of establishing public order, is to render men good citizens, by enlarging their mental capacities to a due comprehension of their rights and obligations as members of a civil community."

"So far (answered Le Jellier) your arguments are incontestible. If nothing more be meant by it than the teaching mankind their duty, I am a convert to your opinion."

"My dear Father, (resumed the Doctor, with an air of pleasantry,) I have no right to accept of your concession till you have explained how far your notion of teaching men their duty corresponds with mine. This idea, I know, can take various shapes, according to the fashion of the times; but I must be honest, and confess to you, that

by it I mean simply the diffusing such a degree of mental light to all the common people, as shall enable even the meanest peasant in his majesty's dominions to form a clear idea of the rights of man, such as they appear to the eye of right reason and sound philosophy, without any regard to the political creed of this or any other time."

This was pushing the argument so closely, that Le Jellier who was strongly inclined to the doctrines of passive obedience and divine right, could not reply without hazarding, as he feared, the entire confidence of the Doctor, and therefore he rather chose to evade the point, by objecting to the giving the common people liberal educations, as tending to subvert the due distinction of classes."

"If (said he) we make scholars of our peasants, will they not shun manual labour? What then becomes of agriculture and those manufactories which supply a foreign trade? When the labourer and mechanic become scarce, as must certainly be the case from such intellectual refinement, what is to become of our commerce? as, on the other hand, the liberal professions will be crowded, to the ruin and beggary of thousands; and in fine, the interest and comfort of society totally destroyed."

"You entirely mistake me, Father le Jellier, if you suppose I intend those superficial

perfidious studies which take men off from the proper business of their stations, or that an advanced degree of mental refinement is compatible with the poverty and active industry of the lower orders. This pre-supposes competence and leisure. The human intellect may attain that degree of improvement which is requisite to the valuable purposes of being at a far less expence. A man will not be a worse tradesman, farmer, or mechanic, for being capable of understanding the interests of his country: in like manner, the husbandman who can reason justly on the nature of moral and social obligations, will not be disqualified for labour, because he feels himself somewhat more an intelligent being than his fellow-labourer, the ox; rather he will perform the duties of his station from principle, which before he discharged with the instinctive reluctance of the cattle which yield to his yoke; nor will those labours be less acceptable to the public, which are a free-will offering to social good, than those which are extorted from mere brutish insensibility.

“ Admitting, however, that by such a general rouse of the human intellect, some talents may be called forth, of a nature superior to the lowest occupations of life, what would this be but a fortunate discovery of genius, otherwise fated to lie for ever dormant. In such a case good policy would

direct the farther improving those talents, till a valuable acquisition was made to some of the superior orders of the community: and happy would it be, should such instances often occur to the superseding those solemn blockheads, who too often disgrace our professional bodies."

Here the Doctor perceiving somewhat of a contemptuous smile on the face of his companion, resumed, with more than usual vivacity, "In truth, my good Father, whatever interests the civil and ecclesiastical powers in some countries may have to consult, in keeping the bulk of the people in ignorance, I am convinced, that the prince, who seeks only the welfare of his people, and the divine, who has no aim but the honour of humanity, will never be unwilling that the rays of intellectual light should diffuse themselves over the whole world."

Notwithstanding, however, the difference of sentiment which often was apparent in such desultory conversations between the two divines, they maintained a mutual good understanding. Dr. Alford, from a habit of candour, readily made allowances for the prejudices of education and opinion, nor thought the Father at all the worse man for dissenting from him in some particular points. But not so Le Jellier; as he bore an inveterate rancour towards Lady Derrick, so he mortally hated every one who
was

was in any respect connected with her. His motives for carrying himself fair with the Doctor have been already hinted; and so complete an adept was he in the art of dissimulation, that the most bitter hatred was veiled with every appearance of profound regard.

The Obriens at length departed from the castle, with the warmest expressions of affection for its noble and amiable proprietress; and, as a farther cement of their reunion, the young Augustus was promised as a visitor to his aunt, as soon as Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien should be at home.

C H A P. IV.

LADY DERRICK, who had never been favoured with more than a transient sight of her nephew, felt a sincere pleasure at his arrival, and thought him even a finer boy than report had represented him. It is not unusual in relative connexions to endeavour the recognizing family resemblances, as though the ties of blood became stronger by such adventitious circumstances. Lady Derrick did thus, and imagined she could plainly retrace in the countenance of her nephew the features of her own father. Augustus was now in his tenth year, and in all respects an engaging child: his open countenance was the index of a frank and generous soul, as the smile which usually sat on his cheek, was a genuine expression of a cheerful and serene temper. His intellectual abilities were very good, and powers of apprehension remarkably acute; yet with tender concern his fond aunt discovered that
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the only acquirements he had made towards its improvement consisted in imperfectly reading English, reverencing crucifixes, and invoking saints. To account for so shameful a neglect of promising talents, two reasons may be assigned: first, Mr. O'Brien's excessive love of money prevented him from procuring the requisite preceptors for his son; and secondly, the contracted state both of his and Le Jellier's ideas, which rendered them indifferent, or rather averse to what is termed liberal education. By the expiration of the month which Augustus was allowed to pass at the castle, he had discovered so much attachment to the several branches of polite learning in which Mariamne had already made a proficiency, that his kind aunt, partly from pity, and partly from personal regard, was induced to express a wish, in a letter she wrote to his father, that the young gentleman might be permitted to become a constant resident in her family.

This letter occasioned no small alteration in the O'Brien family. Mrs. O'Brien saw in that incident the hopeful ripening of her plan; nor was Mr. O'Brien entirely averse to such a measure, on the score of saving expences at home.

"There, my dear, (cried the lady,) you now see the very event I intended to bring about. I foresaw things would happen

pen just as they do. It is plain Lady Derrick loves the boy; and as he is now of an age when the affection he inspires takes deepest hold, it is by all means proper that we consent to his remaining at the castle, where I have no doubt but he will in time completely rival that little beggar's brat, or rather effectually destroy her interest with your sister. What say you, my dear; shall we give up the pleasure of our son's company for a few years, in order to establish his fortune?"

"Why really, (answered he,) it would be a prudent step; but I much doubt whether Father le Jellier will agree to it."

Mrs. O'Brien, in the joy of her heart, had entirely forgot her duty to her spiritual Father, or perhaps was so well satisfied with her own reasoning, as to suppose it impossible for any body to disapprove of it. Herein, however, she was mistaken: the Father was no sooner informed of the scheme they had in agitation, than he fell into a violent rage, and exclaimed, "What, you more than brutish parents, would you deliberately expose your child to perdition? would you resign him into the hands of heretics, and suffer them to instil their cursed poison into his tender mind? first perish the whole house of O'Brien; first let me behold his young limbs stretched on the rack of the inquisition. Oh that the holy tribunal

tribunal were established in this country! I would soon cause that arch apostate to recant, or writhe beneath its tortures: and you, ye unworthy of the name of catholics, you should likewise be made to prove your faith, for much I suspect ye are secretly tinctured by that infernal heresy."

Terrified at his rage, Mrs. O'Brien fell into hysterics; and her husband was obliged to leave her to recover as nature thought proper, in order to follow the priest, who had flung out of the room in great wrath. Something was necessary to be done, to palliate so enormous an offence. O'Brien, with the trembling air of a culprit, dropped on his knees, and pleaded forgiveness so earnestly, that the pious Father was somewhat softened.

Son, (said he,) I require you to hold the things of this world as dirt, in comparison of our child's best interest. What are all the riches of the earth, compared to the value of one soul!"

"Oh! nothing, nothing, most Reverend Father; and I beseech you to hear me assign the motives of my conduct in this matter; from which I hope it will appear that I was not so wholly culpable as appearances would indicate. The interests of our holy church were principally my view: such an acquisition of wealth to our party as my sister's fortune offers, you know, Fa-
ther,

ther, would strengthen the catholic cause; and as Augustus is too young at present to be in any danger of——”

“There may be something in this, son. I think I can perceive that the interests of our holy mother may be promoted by the sacrifice you meditate. This dear boy, the child of my prayers and tears, may doubtless by such an enlargement of temporality, become a glorious pillar of the church.”

“That was the very consideration which weighed with me, Father. You know the great advantage which our common cause hath repeatedly obtained by the zeal of my ancestors; and should so vast a fortune as Lady Derrick possesses be suffered to pass into the hands of our enemies, the injury must be sensibly felt. As for Augustus, methods might be taken to prevent his being corrupted by heretical tenets.”

“Why, as you say, methods might be taken; and on condition you agree to such as I shall deem prudent, I consent for your son to continue a while with this woman.”

“I agree to any thing you propose, Father; but may I take the liberty of asking what those conditions are?”

“They are simply these: your son shall at the age of fourteen be sent to finish his studies at St. Omers: and farther, one moiety of what he shall hereafter inherit by the will of Lady Derrick, shall be consigned

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to me as trustee for the church, to be employed as I shall judge her interests and honour require."

"Most certainly, Father, I agree to this, and whatever else your ghostly wisdom shall devise."

Matters being thus far compromised, Mrs. Obrien had liberty to answer Lady Derrick's epistle in the manner most agreeable to her inclination. Accordingly she surrendered Augustus to the sole care of his aunt, till he should attain the age of fourteen; but with a solemn requisition that no means might be used with her son, tending to pervert him from the faith of his ancestors.

Lady Derrick could not but smile on reading this part of the letter. "Alas! (said she,) they totally mistake my character, if they suppose I set any value on a mode of religion which is the result of prejudice rather than conviction. No,—Augustus shall not be fettered by any system in these matters while he remains with me. The only principles I shall be careful to have him imbibe, are those which it will concern him to know merely as a rational and accountable being."

The little Mariamne was excessively delighted in finding Augustus was to be continued her companion; for there already subsisted a very cordial amity between them,
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Lady Derrick treating them both with an equal tenderness, effectually prevented the emotions of jealousy from taking place in their hearts : a conduct worthy the imitation of all to whom the care of children is entrusted. Her Ladyship was so far of Mrs. Woolstonecraft's sentiments, as to see no reason why youth of both sexes should not walk the paths of learning together. Augustus and Mariamne, therefore, after having learned what are called polite accomplishments of the same masters, were in due order placed under the care of Dr. Alford, who initiated them into the study of moral and natural philosophy ; and in a word, led them at length through the whole circle of the Belles Lettres, in which pleasing task he had the satisfaction of finding in both his pupils a proficiency beyond what he himself could have expected ; with a conviction, also, which rendered his labours truly delightful, namely, that they both loved him. In fine, the Doctor, while he possessed the abilities of an able tutor, was master also of those qualities which never fail to inspire affection in the minds of ingenuous youth. He was grave, as occasion required, without severity, and could, when he chose, be cheerful without levity. Thus he possessed the happy art of rendering himself at once respected and beloved, while he so managed as that every lecture he gave these amiable children

children was received as the dictates of wisdom, united with the tenderness of a friend; and often has the Doctor since declared, that the time he devoted to their instruction composed a series of the happiest hours of his life.

Mariamne's capacity of learning was so solid, that she would, if allowed, have easily followed her companion through the learned languages. "But (said Lady Derrick) I do not want to have my girl a pedant; I only wish her to attain those intellectual accomplishments as are calculated to give value to her heart and stability to her principles; such as if she be blest with prosperity, will adorn it; if fated to adversity, will enable her to support it with dignity. I know not (added she, with a sigh) to what fortune the dear orphan may be exposed, but I will provide her with a treasure which cannot be taken from her."

For the first two years the Doctor's own son added to the number of our academicians; but having remained under his father's care as long as was deemed necessary for fixing his principles, and stamping the image of his future character, he was (being always designed for the army) placed at one of those seminaries of education, where opportunity is afforded of forming splendid connexions. "Though my principal motive, Tom, (said his father, a little before

his departure, in removing you from my own care, be the enabling you to acquire such acquaintances as are capable of assisting your rise in life, yet I must premise that I by no means would have you become a mere time-server; no, my boy, if you can be so fortunate as to acquire the esteem of your superiors by your virtue and good conduct, it will be an honour to you; but if it is to be purchased at the expence of your morals or principles, shun the inglorious pursuit, and return to these arms, which will be ever open to receive you as long as you are an honest lad: but know, that I despise the man who is capable of prostituting his better judgment to interested and mercenary considerations. Beware, therefore, of deserving the character of a sycophant, though such servility should exalt you to the head of the army, rather prefer the condition of a common soldier, if you cannot rise superior to it with honour: those only who would have exacted so dear a price for preferment, will have room to blush at your condition."

C H A P. VII.

MR. and Mrs. Obrien made several visits at the castle during the period of their son's abode with Lady Derrick, and always returned highly satisfied with the success of that measure, as it was evident he had made a flattering progress in the affections of her Ladyship: he was, moreover, every thing which the fondest parent could desire in a successor,—polite, sensible, accomplished. If Mr. Obrien wanted taste to value those attainments, he had vanity enough to be pleased with the commendations he daily heard bestowed on his son; and the reflection that all this had been acquired without any expence on his part, gave him additional pleasure. But that which chiefly gratified his lady, was the consideration that a measure which succeeded so well had been principally of her own devising.

“And now (said she to her husband) we
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have every thing we could wish : Mariamne has evidently lost ground in your sister's affection : our boy engrosses all her regard ; and I am convinced she repents of her folly in fostering she knows not who."

"If this were true, my dear, (replied he,) methinks Lady Derrick takes a very singular method of expressing her compunction.— Does not the girl still occupy a place in her family, and in a style also which is far from proving my sister's neglect of her?"

"Give me leave to tell you, Mr. Obrien, that you are but little acquainted with the nature of female spirit, if you do not perceive that what you mention originates in pride. Do you expect her Ladyship should all at once turn the girl out of doors, and so publickly declare in effect she has done wrong? As to the expences bestowed on her, we are to place this to the account of vanity, since you know the world cannot talk of Mariamne's accomplishments, without at the same time remembering the generosity which bestowed them."

"Mighty well, my dear ; I am perfectly satisfied that the girl should answer this purpose, as long as I can believe our Augustus will reap a more solid advantage."

"And that you may be assured he will ; but when the time comes that we are to hold our heads above all the gentry in Ireland,

land, do not forget, Sir, to thank your wife is the instrument of it."

Thus did Mrs. Obrien take an estimate of one of the best hearts in the world, merely by the narrow scale of her own. But, as it is not unusual for a sanguine imagination to paint as real that which it ardently desires, so the idea of Lady Derrick being less fond of Mariamne was a mere selfish illusion: on the contrary, her Ladyship every hour felt her tenderness towards her augmenting, by the thousand natural attractions, and more than filial regard, which that amiable girl continually evinced. True, she tenderly loved her nephew, but Lady Derrick had a heart commensurate to the love of all the world; and with respect to these two particular objects of it, if the balance of affection preponderated to either side, it was unquestionably on that of Mariamne.

But Augustus had at length completed his fourteenth year, the period prescribed by Father le Jellier for his being entered a student at St. Omers: he was therefore given to understand, that he must prepare to remove from the castle, and accompany Father le Jellier to Flanders.

"My happy days are then departing," cried Mariamne, in a flood of tears, as soon as she heard the unwelcome tidings.

"How so, my love?" (returned Lady

Derrick.) Will you have nobody left here that you can be happy with?"

"I cannot say so, Madam, as long as you and Dr. Alford remain; but I am pained to part with Augustus."

So am I; but it is a measure which we cannot reverse; and you will learn perhaps too soon, my dear Mariamne, that all earthly pleasures are transitory."

When the morning arrived for his departure, Mr. O'Brien's coach arrived at the door. He beheld its approach with a full heart; and turning to Dr. Alford, who was come to give him a parting benediction, said, "Will you not, Sir, continue to me your valuable instructions? Promise me that you will sometimes write."

"I believe, my dear Augustus, that will not be quite proper, (answered the Doctor :) my character may be displeasing to those who will henceforth have the care of your education."

Augustus sensibly chagrined, turned his eye eagerly on Mariamne who stood pensively leaning on Lady Derrick's chair.—

"Your character, Mariamne, cannot surely be displeasing, (cried he in a tender accent,) may I not hope you will thus remember me?"

Before she could reply Lady Derrick assured him that she herself would from time to time give him an account of all their
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healths; with which assurance he was forced to be satisfied; and then, followed by the tender benedictions of all, vaulted into the carriage.

C H A P. VIII.

BY the time our fair heroine had attained her seventeenth year, she was incontestibly the most accomplished female, both as to person and mind, that Hibernia's sun had ever shone on. About this time young Alford was expected to pay a visit to his father. Mariamne had not seen him for a considerable time, at least not since he had assumed the military cloth, and was therefore much surprised to find Lady Derrick conversing one day in the parlour with a handsome young officer whom she found to be no other than the gentleman above-mentioned. Lady Derrick had presented him with a pair of colours; and never was the martial habit assumed with more advantage of appearance. His figure was tall and elegant with a certain expression of sense and vivacity in his countenance particularly engaging. His manner was of the most

most pleasing kind, possessing all that easiness of address, and those polite attentions, which usually distinguish the military character. He was by nature generous, frank, and brave, though quick in his resentments, which the profession he had engaged in tended not to suppress: perhaps, indeed, he had lost something of the philosophical maxims taught him formerly by his father, in some ideas he had acquired of modern honour. However, his conduct hitherto had given the Doctor no room to reproach him for any such exchange.

An agreeable and entertaining companion, nearly too of her own age, might be expected to be considered by Mariamne as no unpleasing acquisition. However valuable she might deem the society of Lady Derrick and the good Doctor, yet it must be confessed, that since the departure of Augustus, the amusements of the castle had wanted that vivacity which is so agreeable to youth: there was a sameness in its scenes which the company of young Alford tended to redress. It can be no wonder, then, that she was pleased with his company, especially as she was convinced that he was endowed with qualities proper to form the estimable friend, as well as the agreeable companion. The young couple passed most of their hours in the company of each other, either at the castle, where he was always a welcome

welcome guest, or in making excursions on horseback round the neighbourhood: sometimes he read to her as she sat at her needle, or accompanied her when she played on the guittar or harpsichord with his voice, which was strong and melodious.

But Alford was naturally susceptible of the liveliest impressions; and Mariamne was too interesting an object to be contemplated by him with the cool eye of friendship alone. He thought her the handsomest woman he had ever seen; but the familiar footing on which, from a child, he had been received in Lady Derrick's family, had so intimately discovered to him a thousand perfections of mind and temper, which must escape mere superficial admirers, that he felt a vacuum in his soul, when not possessed by her idea. In fine, Mariamne was essentially necessary to the felicity of Alford. Lady Derrick perceived this, and she saw it with pleasure. Being one day alone with Mariamne, she said, "I have observed, with much satisfaction, the tenderness which Alford entertains for my girl; tell me ingenuously, my dear, if it be unwelcome to you."

"Indeed, Madam, (returned she, somewhat confused,) I have never made it the subject of my reflections."

"Then, my sweet girl, I wish sincerely you would do so. Tom Alford is a young fellow of great merit; and I confess nothing
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in the world would give me so much pleasure as to believe his attentions were not disagreeable to you."

Mariamne made no reply: she was distressed. Alford was in her idea an agreeable companion, but not the person she had ever wished to be allied to for life, and therefore felt herself much embarrassed at this disclosure of her Ladyship's sentiments, whose will had ever been with her an irrevocable law. Making the best excuse she could, she retired to her chamber, and there seriously revolved in her mind all that had passed. She saw herself under obligations to Lady Derrick, greatly superior to those which a child owes its parent, inasmuch as the latter stands bound by the laws of nature to the discharge of all possible love towards those who have received being from them: whereas Lady Derrick, though perhaps obliged by common humanity to save life when it was in her power, yet certainly she was by no laws required to exercise that unbounded generosity, and more than maternal tenderness, which she had constantly received from her Ladyship. It was obviously then incumbent on her (she thought) to make some returns to this exalted goodness; but could she make a return? Yes. Lady Derrick had shewn it to be in her power to augment her happiness, and should she for a moment demur in so doing. On the
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other hand, what could she reasonably object to her Ladyship's wishes? Tom Alford was unquestionably a worthy young man; and if she felt not for him any ardour of affection, perhaps esteem was all that was requisite on her part. Upon the whole she determined to give her benefactress no uneasiness, by affecting in her behaviour to Alford any degree of reserve which had not heretofore been necessary, leaving it to time, and the farther disclosure of her Ladyship's will, to determine her final conduct. Alford, therefore, perceived no alteration in the behaviour of Mariamne: the same frankness and good-humour subsisted between them as usual; and this, indeed, was all which ever had existed. Alford, though tenderly attached to her, had never dropped the remotest intimation of his real feelings; for which two reasons might be given: the one, that he much questioned Lady Derick's approbation of his passion for one who in all respects was regarded as her own daughter; the other, his freedom from all apprehensions of a rival; he had never been mortified by the presence of any one at the castle, whom he had any reason to suppose aspired to the favour of Mariamne. Content, therefore, to be received on the footing of a friend, he had hitherto presumed at nothing farther; and being little versed in the knowledge of the female heart, seldom

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or ever felt a doubt but that the regard was mutual.

From the manner in which Alford always spoke of Mariamne to his father, the Doctor was convinced of the nature of his sentiments, but the discovery secretly gave him concern; to think of matching his son with the adopted daughter of Lady Derrick appeared presumption; and he determined to check the inclination, whenever a proper opportunity offered for touching on the subject. In this opinion, he saw with some impatience the approach of that time which would call his son to the regiment he now belonged to. At length it arrived; and our young soldier, after three months of uninterrupted pleasure at the Castle, was obliged reluctantly to enter on scenes of more gaiety indeed, but to him far less enjoyment.

Soon after his departure, Lady Derrick laughingly observed to the Doctor, that she believed the young officer had left his heart at the Castle.

"I hope not, Madam," replied he, with a very serious air.

"You hope not, Sir; I am afraid, then, you judge us unworthy of the deposit."

The Doctor shook his head.

"Laying trifling aside, Dr. Alford, (resumed her Ladyship,) you cannot have forgotten my having designed Mariamne for

your son. I am delighted in discovering a tenderness between them; and now would fain ask what your objections are to it."

"The only objection I make, my Lady, is, that Tom being the son of a poor parson, and no better than a soldier of fortune, must be an improper match for Mariamne."

"Very well,—if that is all you have to object, I shall from this moment consider him as the future husband of my girl."

"And if he be worthy the honour, may he one day become such, since your Ladyship is pleased to wave pecuniary considerations: but, Madam, so nicely jealous am I of my Mariamne's happiness, that I can only consent to this measure, provided Tom proves himself deserving of her."

"And that, Doctor, I do not in the least fear."

"I am not quite so sanguine, my Lady. Tom, I sincerely believe, is an honest, open-hearted lad at present; but he is now gone to tread a path with which he is unacquainted, and no one knows how he may get entangled in the snares which lie thick in his way;—or, in other words, the world new to him:—it is the theatre on which a man's character is determined;—its temptations prove the stability of his principles; and though I hope much from the education he has received, yet, Madam, I also see a great deal to fear.

"This,

"This, I am persuaded, is nothing more than the anxiety natural to a good parent. However, it is generally allowed, I think, that nothing tends more to the cherishing proper principles in your sex, than a tender connexion with a virtuous woman."

"I readily admit it, Madam, and am fully persuaded that my son entertains a very sincere affection for Mariamne; but is your Ladyship certain of her having the same favourable opinion of him?"

"I see not the smallest reason to doubt it: her behaviour to him has constantly proved as much as female delicacy allows: nay farther, in a conversation I once had with her on the subject, she gave a tacit assent to the proposal, which is as much as we ought to expect."

"Very good;—and since your Ladyship condescends to put all the honour of this measure on our side, reserving only to yourself the credit of a most disinterested generosity, I earnestly hope my boy will evince a proper sense of the obligation."

C H A P. VIII.

DURING this period letters were frequently received by Lady Derrick from her nephew at St. Omers, by the complexion of which it appeared, that he was very little satisfied with his present situation. He complained much of the gloomy austerity of his tutors, and fondly regretted the days he had passed in the company of his beloved preceptor, Dr. Alford.——“I once (said he, in one of his letters) thought the paths of learning delightful, when listening to the endearing language of wisdom, as it flowed from the lips of Dr. Alford: truth, as displayed by him, appeared amiable in my eye; but now her garb is sable, and her visage wrapped in gloom. They tell me I am insensible of her charms, and they say true. If, indeed, the odious spectre they pourtray be truth, oh! how fallen, how changed from that bright object which allured

lured my soul, when led to her sacred shrine by the hand of my former beloved tutor. Science, then, was liberal; but, here the slave of systematic ignorance. Moral philosophy, also, a noble field, in which the mind enlarged her faculties, and in her ample view took in the whole of human kind,—here is a sordid plat, fenced round with prejudice, and hedged by partial illustration. Religion, too,——but I forbear.——In both you, Madam, and Dr. Alford, I remember, it was a kind of heavenly radiance, diffusing an amiable lustre over all your words and actions; but——

Here the young student prudently suppressed his reflections, though the fact was, that he heartily despised the numerous superstitions and gloomy austerities which he here saw daily practised, under the name of piety. To his enlightened mind they appeared frivolous, and utterly unworthy the dignity of rational devotion. The narrow ideas and excessive bigotry of the several professors were also a farther subject of his disgust.

“I hear much of heresy, (said he, in another letter,) and even you, Madam, according to their definition, are one of those who cannot be saved. This I will not believe. The mere light of nature could suggest that virtue must be pleasing to Heaven;

and was revelation given to contradict so rational an idea!"

In short, Augustus was so wholly averse to receive the absurd dogmas of his college education, that his tutors pronounced him to be one of those untractable beings, whose stubbornness no efforts of persuasion or severity could soften. Thus mutually dissatisfied with each other, the desire of separating was nearly equal on both sides; but, though Augustus earnestly entreated to leave to return home, Father le Jelliof absolutely refused it, notwithstanding Mrs. O'Brien's impatience to see her son induced her to second his request with much earnestness.

The Obriens, ever attentive to their interest, took care duly to maintain a friendly correspondence with Lady Derrick: they frequently visited at the castle, where they beheld with envy the daily advances of Mariamne to every female perfection; but the connexion they understood to be on foot between her and young Alford tended to quiet some apprehensions they would otherwise have felt respecting her future influence on their son; they were therefore saying the handsomest things of Alford, (whom, however, they scarcely knew any thing of,) in order to facilitate the match previous to Augustus's

Augustus's return. On their last visit they were accompanied by Le Jellier and Lady Catherine Macauley. This Lady was nearly of Mariamne's age, but of a character no ways adapted to excite her esteem; with an immoderate share of pride, she was the most insignificant of human beings; endowed by nature with one of the best constitutions, she ever affected the lassitude of indisposition; and though profoundly ignorant, attempted to talk of every thing, assuming at the same time that air of effrontery which people of condition are apt to mistake for high-breeding or wit.

She had not been two hours arrived when poor Mariamne was sensibly mortified by hearing her address Mrs. Obrien, who sat at the opposite side of the room, in the following style:—

"Really, Mrs. Obrien, I protest I am vastly angry with you. Did you not tell me I should see a most prodigious beauty at the castle?"

"And have I deceived your ladyship?" answered she, secretly hurt at such unpardonable behaviour.

"Pon honour, (staring most insolently at Mariamne,) I can see no such beauty. But I ask your pardon, Miss, with all my heart, though——"

"Indeed, my Lady (replied she, spiritedly,) I regard beauty as so very paltry a consideration,

a consideration, that I shall never be displeased with any one for disallowing me a claim to it."

"You are right, my dear, (rejoined Lady Derrick, piqued at the affront offered her darling;) I had rather see common sense and common good manners."

"Besides, (said Father le Jellier,) as the ladies can never judge fairly of beauty in their own sex, Lady Catherine must not assume the right of decision which belongs properly to us."

But, though the character of Lady Catherine was chiefly made up of pride, ignorance, and illiberality of mind, her present ill manners were the result of particular circumstances. She had gazed at Mariamne till she had fully discovered her beauty far eclipsed her own; which conviction so forcibly excited the sensations of envy, that, giving way to the impulse, her Ladyship publicly declaimed against that superiority of person which secretly she was compelled to allow.

It being a fine summer evening, Mariamne, desirous of shewing a superiority to the malicious vulgarity of her ladyship's behaviour, politely asked her to take a walk after tea.

"A walk! (reiterated Lady Catharine yawning most indolently;) what, I warrant now you are for dragging me up a hill to see

see a prospect, or taking me along some thorny lane of four or five miles length. All this is nothing, I suppose, to you, who are blest with sound health, but for me, I should expire before I had walked twenty yards, my poor nerves are so deranged.— Mrs. Obrien, pray lend me your eau de luce.”

Finding every attempt which urbanity and politeness made to the entertaining her Ladyship wholly lost on so insipid a being, Mariamne was content to give up the design, at least for that evening. When the guests were retired to the several apartments assigned them, Lady Derrick affectionately taking Mariamne by the hand, said, “I doubt, my love, you will have but an unpleasant time of it while Lady Catherine is here, whose envy, I see, will never suffer her to be a tolerable companion. She is a poor, vain, trifling woman, unworthy of my dear Augustus.”

Mariamne involuntarily started, and looked an ardent desire to know how it was likely Augustus should be affected by Lady Catherine's insignificance of character.— Lady Derrick reading her countenance, resumed thus:—

“You do not, I believe, yet know, Mariamne, that this is the identical woman selected to be the future wife of Augustus; and indeed, with regard to circumstances,
a very

a very eligible choice ; for none but a woman of family and fortune will be considered as a fit match for him by his parents ; but this Lady Catharine is far beneath the standard of his own merit."

"Far, indeed," repeated Mariamne, with a sigh.

"And yet, (resumed her Ladyship,) to determined are both Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien on the match, that, should he object to it, they would disinherir him."

Mariamne shewing no inclination to continue the discourse, they retired for the night.

It was twelve at noon before the company quitted their apartments on the succeeding day. Father le Jellier, indeed, had risen several hours before ; and, attracted by the sound of Mariamne's elegant finger on the harpsichord, he followed her to the music room. To confess a truth, old as he was, he could not behold such an assemblage of charms with indifference. He wished for an opportunity of conversing with her alone, and therefore, when she arose at his entrance, he entreated she would sit still, and continue those charming sounds, which, he said, angels might stop to hear.

"You are very gallant this morning, Father le Jellier ; such a compliment from you."

"And why not from me ? (with a gaiety rather

rather unsuitable to his cloth.) Do you suppose, Madam, we old fellows are insensible to the perfections of an accomplished woman?"

"You ought to be allowed the best judges of them, Sir, whose discernment is supposed not influenced by passion; and therefore it is that your compliments tend to excite an unpardonable vanity."

"But you have no vanity, my dear young lady; your behaviour to that ridiculous minx of quality last night convinces me you have none. But, pray, how do you like the future Lady Catharine Obrien?"

Piqued at being treated so familiarly by a man with whom she had so slight an acquaintance and perhaps for other reasons also, she answered peevishly,—

"As I imagine, Sir, my opinion will never be consulted on the occasion, I have not yet determined on the mode of expressing it."

Thus saying she arose and withdrew.—
Le Jellier, as before observed, was an admirer of our heroine; and, although the handsome things he was perpetually saying to her came rather uncouthly from one of his years and character, she rather attributed his gallantry to the *politesse* of a Frenchman, (for such he was,) than any improper sentiment. As to Mrs. Obrien, judging by her own conduct, she gave him credit for a larger

larger share of dissimulation than on this occasion he really merited.

At breakfast, the usual compliments being properly exchanged, Lady Derrick, addressing Mr. O'Brien, said, "I believe, brother, you have not seen the improvements I have made this summer in the park: if agreeable to the company we will take an airing till dinner time."

Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien bowed assent, as did Lady Catharine, who eagerly demanded of what nature those improvements were, and whether there was any thing of architecture to be seen in the ride.

"I have erected a small building, (answered Lady Derrick,) of which I should be glad to have your Ladyship's opinion."

"And I assure you, Madam, I am something of a judge in those matters. Of which of the orders may it be, my Lady? There is the Doric, the Gothick, and so forth; but of all things I am an admirer of the Gothic. But now you talk of improvements, it were a pity your Ladyship did not bestow some on this enormous heap of stones and oak you term the castle."

"Why, let me tell you, Lady Catharine, (returned Mr. O'Brien,) this mansion is esteemed by connoisseurs to be a complete pile of architecture."

"To be sure, Sir, it is a magnificent, regular, and well-constructed building: I have

have too good a taste to deny that ; but I do not like the style of it."

" I thought, my Lady, you just now confessed yourself an admirer of the Gothic ; and this Castle is without doubt the finest edifice of that kind in the kingdom."

Lady Catherine, foiled at her own weapons, blushed,—not at her ignorance, but at the mortification of a defeat. Lady Derrick however, to relieve her chagrin, politely turned the conversation ; and at length the carriage waited to take the company on their morning excursion ; but, unluckily, Lady Catharine chanced to turn her eyes on a vane, and instantly exclaimed, " As I live the wind is due east ; I would not stir out of doors for the Indies ; it would be my death ; and, indeed, I guessed this to be the case by the state of my poor nerves to-day."

This vane, however, being of a date coeval with the castle itself, was so much impaired, that for many years it had ceased to change its position. It was in vain that this circumstance was made known to her Ladyship ; she was (she said) better informed by her own feelings, and positively refused to stir out. The plan was therefore entirely frustrated ; Mr. O'Brien and Le Jellier set out on foot, while the four ladies returned to the house, the dupes of affectation and whim.

In this manner passed a tedious fortnight, Lady Catherine constantly interrupting, by her intolerable caprice, every scheme of amusement, either at home or abroad, till at length Lady Derrick clearly perceived, in this conduct, a most malicious design of thwarting the pleasures of others. However such a discovery must have degraded her in the estimation of one so remarkable for benignity, every polite attention was shewn her during the visit, which at length happily expired, to the entire satisfaction of Lady Derrick and Mariamne.

C H A P.

CHAP. IX.

SOME time in the following winter, Alford, having obtained leave of absence, obeyed the impulse of his ardent passion, by making another visit at the village which contained all he thought necessary to complete felicity. He was by this time, through the interest of Lady Derrick and some other friends, promoted in the army, in which department he had conducted himself with such propriety as to afford strong hopes of one day serving his country in a very elevated station. Lady Derrick, from motives which appeared to her of great importance, determined that his union with Mariamne should take place without delay.

“ I need not (said she to her) enumerate instances of my conduct, to convince my beloved girl that she is dear to me, or that my affection for her surpasses that of a mere relative tie; my own happiness, Mariamne, is bound up with your’s, and but a bare

idea of your missing it is sufficient to render me miserable. I am old, and cannot expect long to be with you. Nay, do not weep, my best love; I am obliged thus to wound your feelings in the solicitude I have for your future welfare. Compose yourself, Mariamne, and attend to me.

“ Should I be taken from you, there appears but one way, my dear, for you to secure yourself from the inconveniencies which would certainly follow, and that is by choosing a protector,—one who shall have tenderness enough to render your domestic scenes happy, and courage to protect you from the injuries of the base. Without such a protector, think what must otherwise become your situation: youth, beauty and inexperience can hardly hope to escape the snares of a vicious world. True, I shall not leave you destitute of fortune, but this will but the rather expose you to the mark of mercenary baseness. You have no relative connexions. Unknown to the world, how shall my beloved child escape misery and ruin. Here the idea I just now suggested again occurs. Tom Alford is calculated to prove the valuable protector I described. Say then, my Mariamne, have you any objection to an alliance with him? I think, indeed, you have none; and I confess, that to see you thus happily settled in life, would be a means of softening the ap-
pre-

prehensions of my last hour. I will, however, urge you no farther at present. I am going for half an hour to my dressing-room; and at my return will hope for my Mariamne's answer."

So far was Mariamne from ever having made marriage the subject of her serious reflections, that she did not even regard young Alford in any other light than that of a pleasing companion or valuable friend; and, had it rested only with herself, would certainly not have meditated a matrimonial alliance with him. Lady Derrick however, had now delivered her sentiments in terms which it became her to obey, influenced, as she sincerely was, by filial respect and tenderness for that excellent woman. She had said the marriage of the girl whom she had nourished as her child, was necessary to her happiness; and could it then be refused, consistently with the duty and affection due to her. As to Alford, there was certainly nothing to be objected against him; and if there *had* been, Lady Derrick's inclination ought to determine her's.

Of this nature were Mariamne's cogitations during the time she was left to herself; and so fully, at length, did she resolve on obeying the dictates of reason and duty, that, whatever her secret inclinations might be, her answer to Lady Derrick was perfectly that which her Ladyship wished, who,

therefore, tenderly embracing her, said, "You sensibly oblige me, my dear Mariamne, by thus complying with a measure which otherwise, perhaps, might have been deferred to some distant day. As to your sentiments respecting Alford, I have long supposed them of a favourable kind, and have therefore nothing to do but to rejoice in the prospect of my child's happiness, of which I can now entertain not the smallest doubt."

Alford, though hitherto he had never ventured a disclosure of his passion, was henceforth authorised to regard Mariamne as his own, and never was man more grateful for such permission. The next time Dr. Alford came to the castle, it was determined that the young couple should be united some day within the next fortnight.

"And now (added her Ladyship) you must allow, Dr. Alford, that I have fully acquitted myself of the promise I made on the night you introduced my Mariamne to me. This young soldier is in a fair way of rising to a very considerable station in the army, the emoluments of which, together with the fortune I shall settle on my girl, will enable them to live with comfort, and as much eclat, as I fancy either of them would wish for. Tom will certainly prove a tender husband to my poor child, and supply to her my place when I am no more."

"And

"And if (answered the Doctor) there be any thing in his composition to obstruct it, may I follow him to the tomb, rather than to his nuptials."

While preparations for the wedding were briskly going on, news very unexpectedly arrived that Augustus was returned to Ireland. Tired with his importunity, and urged by parental fondness, the Obriens had won over Le Jellier to their wishes, and leave was given the young gentleman to quit St. Omers. The first three days of his arrival were devoted to his parents; the fourth to his aunt, a piece of respect which the family thought extremely proper.——

"And you will probably (said Mr. O'Brien) be in time to witness the wedding gala;—— Mariamne is soon to be married to young Alford."

"To young Alford?" in a faint voice.

"Yes, and I think your aunt has very wisely disposed of her favourite."

"May they be happy!" was all the reply he made, and immediately hastened his visit to the castle, not, indeed, with a desire of sharing the hymenial gaiety, but to see persons he sincerely loved. He had not proceeded far on his journey before he fell into the following soliloquy: "Whither am I going? What business have I at the castle? Mariamne cannot now wish to see me. Yet why

why should I not go? Alford is doubtless the person of her choice? and shall I therefore be dissatisfied because he is happy! I will go on; as a friend, I may and ought to share in their joy."

When Augustus arrived at the castle, Alford and Mariamne were sitting by the side of each other in the parlour, and Lady Derrick and the Doctor at the other side of the room at a game of piquet.

At sight of such a stranger joy flushed every face. He approached with a cool and timid air. The warm congratulations of her Ladyship and the Doctor he indeed returned with ardour; but when Mariamne, with the frankness which had formerly distinguished their behaviour to each other, approached to welcome him, he returned her civilities with so lifeless an air, that she retired, secretly abashed, to her chair. Alford, also, in consequence of former boyish acquaintance, shook him cordially by the hand.

"May you be happy, Sir," was the reply and certainly it was a very odd one for the occasion; however, in the general bustle it passed unnoticed.

After some little time Augustus began to recollect himself; his air became more assured, and some faint traces of his usual vivacity beamed in his conversation. He conversed cheerfully with his aunt and the Doctor of the nature of his college life: then

then addressing Alford, reverted to the several jocular tricks and pleasant pastimes of their juvenile days; and at last turning to Mariamne, whom he seemed to view with surprise and admiration, said, "I should scarcely have known my sweet sister again, you are so much altered, Mariamne."

"And so, I think, are you, Augustus," coolly, but with an emphatical accent.

So extremely apt are we, in the present state of things, to mistake in the interpretations we put on externals, that Mariamne, perceiving the air and manner of Augustus to favour so much of restraint, and, in short, to be so very different from what it had been during his abode at the Castle, that she hesitated not to impute the change to the growth of family pride, which, she well knew, characteristically belonged to the Obriens; and therefore, with the piquant spirit of a female, determined henceforth to treat him in a style of mere distant politeness.

As the wedding-day was yet at some distance, Augustus complied with the invitation Lady Derrick pressingly gave him, of passing a week with her, and in that time he earnestly endeavoured to bring his mind to such a frame as should be no interruption to the general good-humour; and, indeed, there could be no reason (he at last concluded) for a contrary behaviour: though

he tenderly loved Mariamne, it did not necessarily follow that she should have the same sentiments towards him. In accepting the addresses of Alford, she had done nothing culpable; and wherefore then should he not wish well to their union, and even participate in their happiness. By constantly pursuing such a mode of reflection, he was enabled to be a social companion, at length went a considerable way, by a more open behaviour, to remove the prejudices of Mariamne herself.

Finding her one day, in the absence of Alford, alone in a retired part of the garden, something like an *éclaircissement* took place to the following effect.

"My aunt, I perceive, has made some very happy improvements in her gardens and pleasure-grounds, the effect, doubtless, of Mariamne's elegant taste."

"I can claim not the least merit therefrom, I assure you, Sir."

"And why that distant appellation?—Once we knew no distinctions but those of Mariamne and Augustus: these (sighing) were halcyon days."

"If I was then ignorant of the difference fortune has placed between us, I ought now the more carefully to atone for the error."

"Cruel Mariamne! Blame not fortune for what is the result of caprice. Through this medium only you see the mighty difference."

Such

Such severity from the mouth of Augustus was too much for her fortitude; she burst into tears.

"What have I said! (exclaimed he.)—Oh! Mariamne, forgive me! forgive the reproaches of my——friendship. But, indeed, I can bear any thing rather than this chilling distance, this cutting formality from you."

"Give me leave to ask you on whose side the formality you complain of originated?"

"I answer that question by saying, that could you have read my heart, you would have put a very different construction on my behaviour. Oh! I could discover such a train of feelings, as should lead even you to pity. But I forbear. I know your situation, and will ask of you no more than Alford himself may readily allow. Give me, Mariamne, only the same frank familiar treatment which I was accustomed to receive in my happier days. Why can I not, still be your friend? the friend of Alford also?"

"Let us go towards the house, Augustus," said she, in a tremulous voice.

At that moment they perceived Alford approaching.

"What is the matter? (looking tenderly on her.) You are unwell."

"I feel

"I feel myself a little indisposed," leaning on the arm which he held out to her support.

By the time they had reached the house, her cheeks had re-assumed their bloom, and the whole party sat down to supper. Augustus appeared more cheerful than before, and happiness seemed to pervade every bosom.

From that hour Mariamne impatiently longed for the day which was to confirm her Alford's till death, though till now she had seldom meditated on it without a secret sigh: for Augustus's sake she wished it over, and with whom she carefully avoided being alone, though the precaution seemed not necessary. He was firmly resolved, no word or action should escape him, inconsistent with the sacredness of friendship.

"But, alas! how fragile are all human resolutions, in which the passions are tenderly concerned.

CHAP. XI.

AUGUSTUS had insensibly exceeded the time allotted by himself for his stay at the Castle; the wedding day approached, and the morrow was that fixed for the ceremony. Something being dropped relative to that occasion, he started suddenly, as from a painful reverie, and unmindful of every thing but his own feelings, eagerly caught hold of Mariamne's hand, and exclaimed,—

“With thee conversing, I forget all time,

“All seasons, and their change”——

“A fine poetical veil (cried Mariamne) to conceal a giddy mind.”

In an instant he was conscious of impropriety; and immediately taking the hand of Alford, joined it with that of his mistress.

“I shall not (said he) witness the cere-

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mony which secures your happiness,—but may every blessing light on your union.”

He uttered this in an earnest and pathetic manner, and immediately retired. Mariamne glancing her eye on Alford, saw his face clouded in gloom. He had fixed his eyes on the floor; and now hastily rising, made some trifling excuse, and withdrew.

At dinner, the chair he usually occupied was vacant.

“Where is Captain Alford?” said Lady Derrick.

However, no more was then said; the cloth was removed, and Alford appeared not.

It now occurred to Augustus that Alford’s behaviour indicated resentment, of which he perhaps had thoughtlessly been the cause; following, therefore, Mariamne out of the room with an air of concern, he entreated her pardon.

“Pardon! (returned she,) I do not understand you. In what do you suppose yourself to have offended?”

“Oh! Mariamne, believe me I would not intentionally occasion you a moment’s pain. I have done wrong: I see it now, and will this moment quit the Castle. But no, (recollecting himself,) not without first repairing the mischief I have thoughtlessly occasioned. You must allow me to bring Alford hither: in a few moments all shall be set to rights.”

This,

This, however, she would not admit of, and attempted to rally what she called a most ridiculous apprehension.—However, towards evening a note was delivered to Augustus: it was Alford's hand on the cover; and Mariamne's boding heart anticipated its contents. He read it with apparent indifference, and soon after left the room. The note, indeed, contained a challenge; and, from the known impetuosity of Alford's temper, Mariamne suspected its being so. Lady Derrick was just gone to visit a friend five or six miles from home; she had, therefore, none to whom she could immediately disclose her apprehensions.

"Wretch that I am, (cried she), thus to be the occasion of separating friends, and perhaps of shedding blood.—Would that the ocean had for ever hid me in its bosom, that the tempest had put an end to the existence over which misery is suspended."

Thus half-distracted, she flew from room to room, vainly seeking Augustus, who had shut himself into his own apartment, meditating on the fatal business. The result of his reflections was, that as he had really, though without intention, afforded Alford cause for disquiet, it became him, as a man of honour, to meet him at the appointed place, and give him an opportunity of revenging the injury, fully determined not to fire himself. With this intention he opened

the door; and as he proceeded on the stairs was met by Mariamne, who, with frantic looks, demanded whither he was going, and what were the contents of the biller he had received.

"I cannot satisfy you now, Mariamne, (replied he;) you shall soon know all."

"You stir not, (catching hold of his arm, and shedding a torrent of tears.) I only deserve—"

She could utter no more.—Entirely mistaking the cause of her emotion, he replied, disengaging himself, "Fear not, Mariamne, for Alford's safety: I would do nothing to injure it; but if I had a thousand lives, they should be readily sacrificed to your repose."

Before she could answer he was gone. For some minutes she remained stupified with grief and horror: at length recollecting impending circumstances, she flew out of the house, enquiring of the gardener, who happened to pass her, which way O'Brien was gone.

"I just now saw him crossing yonder field."

She followed; but in her haste, her foot slipping, she struck her head so violent a blow against the angle of a stone, that for some time she lay senseless on the ground. Nature at length returned to its functions, and reflection revived. She renewed her
speed,

speed, but the accident had delayed her too long. Alford and Obrien had taken their ground, and stood in the attitude of firing. With the rapidity of lightning she flew betwixt them; and stretching out her arms to shelter Augustus, received the contents of Alford's pistol in her shoulder.

"It is enough, (cried she,) I have saved thy life, and thy revenge, Alford, might now be satisfied; I shall die blest, since Augustus is safe."

Motionless as the statue of despair, the wretched Alford saw the bullet he had aimed at Augustus depriving his espoused wife of life. He saw him remove the bleeding victim in his arms, without essaying to utter one word; but no sooner was he alone than he resolved on the still more desperate act of suicide. Seizing for that purpose Obrien's pistol, which lay on the ground, he found it had not been charged. Here was, then, a fresh aggravation of his rash conduct. Stung, even to madness, by reflection, he was just about to load, and end his miserable existence, when some persons, having been alarmed by the report of the fatal pistol, were hastening to the spot. At sight of them, with ten thousand horrors depicted on his frantic countenance, he flew into an adjoining wood.

By this time Augustus had conveyed the expiring Mariamne to the castle; a mes-

surgeon was dispatched for the nearest surgeon, another for Lady Derrick; meanwhile the distressed Obrien hung pale and motionless over the sofa on which his Marianne lay, now almost a lifeless corpse. In a voice broken by sighs he uttered the most plaintive strains of grief and tenderness. "Fare (cried he) shall not separate me from all my soul held dear on earth. I will follow thee, Marianne: thou art mine in death, and Alford's claims are hence extinct."

As he uttered this, Lady Derrick, whose arrival he had not observed, stood by him in speechless agony.

"Then (cried she, at length, after having for some minutes endeavoured in vain to utter the anguish of her soul,) then Augustus, it is I who have murdered my heart's dear delight."

The surgeon now arriving, examined the wound, and shook his head; he desired the room might be cleared, and his patient kept free from all disturbance: but it was in vain they would have prevailed on Augustus to retire; mute with woe, he knelt by the bedside. But at length, at the entreaties of his aunt, he retired without the chamber door, where he anxiously watched the fate of Marianne, now delirious through excessive pain. In this state of intellectual derangement,

ment, Lady Derrick, who never quitted her bed side for a moment, heard her often, during the night, repeat the name of Augustus with tenderness and energy. The state of their respective feelings was now apparent, to the unutterable grief of that most excellent woman, who severely accused herself of being the real author of the mischief which had happened, by having too earnestly urged the marriage of Mariamne with Alford.

“Respect and duty (cried she, weeping) have prevailed on my poor unhappy girl to adopt a measure in which her heart, it is too clear, had no concern.”

By the next morning, however, Mariamne's fever was much abated, and the surgeon's report was much more favourable than it had been the preceding evening; on which occasion Obrien expressed his joy in terms which sufficiently shewed how deeply his happiness was concerned in the event. As to Lady Derrick, though the satisfaction she experienced from the surgeon's favourable account was not to be doubted, yet the discovery which the late unfortunate event had given rise to, sat heavy on her spirits. She saw three amiable young persons rendered miserable; but most of all her heart bled for the unpropitious fate which too certainly

certainly appeared to await her dear girl, who, she had hoped, would have proved the joy of her future life.

C H A P. XII.

BUT it is now time to return to Alford, who, immediately on the shocking catastrophe, had retired into the wood. Ill news flies on eagles' wings; soon, therefore, it reached the good Doctor, who was smoking his evening pipe in a little arbour before his house. The pipe instantaneously fell from his trembling hand; and for some minutes he sat without power of motion. At length he exclaimed, "And are these, then, the issue of all those bright prospects which but now amused my delighted imagination!—Are these, oh! my beloved Mariamne, thy nuptial vigils!—A corpse!—and that by the hand of a son of mine!—He thy murderer, whom I hoped would have blest thy orphan fate with fondest love—my son—he has murdered thee——"

Here the venerable mourner sunk into a train of reflections too severe for reason
long

long to have sustained, but from these he was awakened by his faithful domestic, urging the necessity of providing for the safety of his young master.

“And dost thou imagine (cried the Doctor) these doors shall ever shelter a murderer? No—since I have unfortunately given birth to a daring violator of every sacred law, let the hand of justice seize him: I feel not that I am a father. In the wood do you say he is? Then I will go thither, and these grey hairs shall reproach him with the misery he has drawn on a father’s short existence.”

When the Doctor and his faithful attendant got to the wood, they perceived Alford stand pensively by the side of a small brook. He started at their approach; and with a ghastly smile, pointing to the stream, said, “Do you see?—Mariamne lies there;—how beautiful she looks;—aye, and kind, too;—she has just vowed never to love O’rien.”

The afflicted parent now, for the first time, found vent for his sorrows in tears. Jealousy, he saw, had prompted the rash conduct of his son, and passion was succeeded by madness. He turned silently from the horrid scene; and some time after saw the poor maniac conveyed towards the house, alternately raving and singing as they bore him reluctantly along.

Tidings

Tidings were now brought from the castle that Mariamne was not dead, as at the first reported, but that the wound being examined, admitted of at least the possibility of recovery. Fain would the Doctor have poured his sympathizing tears over that dear object of his tenderest regard; but his presence at the Castle could only add to the distress already there; he therefore spent the night in roaming about the fields adjoining to his house, sometimes casting himself prostrate on the damp ground, and disturbing the stillness of the night with his plaintive moans. With the returning light he heard there were now hopes of Mariamne's recovery.

"It is enough, (cried he,) I am satisfied and grateful; she lives, and Lady Derrick will yet see a restoration of happiness. I am content, since misery is confined to my own door. The evil is tolerable which extends not to others, to those who deserve exemption from it."

With an air of more composure, he then returned to his house, and visited his unhappy son, whom he found in all the wildness of confirmed frenzy.

"Patience, (cried the afflicted father, elevating his eyes to heaven,) patience and submission are the duties becoming sinful men. The evils of this, our suffering state, spring from ourselves alone: in the irregularity

gularity of the passions they originate, and man alone the author."

Leaving the good man to calm the surges of his afflicted mind by the salutary aids of humble and sincere piety, we will return to the Castle.

Marianne having regained the full use of her reason, and feeling the pain of her wound considerably abated, desired to be raised in her bed, and that she might be permitted to speak to Augustus in presence only of Lady Derrick. The attendants being therefore withdrawn, she began as follows:—

"After what has passed, it were both weak and absurd to attempt a palliation of error by affectation or untimely reserve, and therefore, in full confidence of my dear Lady Derrick's maternal goodness, and of your ingenuous and upright nature, Augustus, I shall freely unbolom myself on the present unhappy occasion. That we have both been wrong, is, alas! too apparent; yet has our misconduct proceeded only from the impulse of an unguarded moment, and was neither the effect of coquetry on my side, nor, I am persuaded, of a base ungenerous design on your's. Thus far, perhaps, our error has been involuntary: but, farther indulged, would severely reproach the remotest pretensions to integrity or honour. It is time, then, that we exert the powers

powers of reflection, to enable us to perceive that we are on the very verge of baseness and dishonour; and to induce you, Augustus, to repress any future expressions of a passion which circumstances render criminal, suffer me to remind you, that I am both in the eye of reason and equity the wife of Alford."

"What you suggest, Mariamne, (returned Augustus,) is not in my power to perform; neither can I see the validity of the argument. My tenderness for you was prior to that of Alford; nay more, it is almost coeval with my being. I nourished it as the solace of my heart when compelled to be absent from you; and I returned to Ireland with that sentiment vigorous and improving in my soul; but when I saw you about to be married to another, and believed, also, to the person of your affections, I was silent: I strove to suppress my feelings; and though I had not been successful, I should so far have mastered my conduct, as to have given no interruption to the happiness of my rival, had not his own impetuosity of temper and groundless suspicions brought circumstances to what they are. Assured, at length, that Augustus is dear to his adored Mariamne, what powers, what obligations, have force to invalidate the union of two hearts formed for each other."

VOL. I.

I

"I

“ I attempt not (resumed mariamne) to disguise my sentiments, which the apprehension of your danger unguardedly disclosed; yet till that moment I knew not the full extent of those sentiments. Taught from my earliest years to regard you as the relation of my honoured benefactress, I nourished a prejudice in your favour so far, that, had it depended only on my own choice, I should certainly have chosen you before all mankind: nay, farther, I was in different to all but yourself: yet several circumstances conspired to forbid my indulging so fond an idea. Had Alford never been, Mariamne could not have been your's—Strong are the reasons which prohibited such a thought. Recall, then, Augustus, ideas so unworthy of yourself; resume your wonted rectitude of soul; and wound not your conscience by a conduct every way repugnant to the dictates of generosity and honour. Alford, though perhaps of a temper too impatient, is nevertheless an honest, worthy young man: his late rashness proceeded from a nice sense of love and honour. Authorized to entertain me on the subject of his passion, and certainly not forbidden by myself, could he have any idea of a right superior to his own? Whatever, therefore my private feelings might be, I hold that right as sacred. I consider myself as bound to him by ties which never can be

be broken with honour; and farther, should he, from motives of delicacy, reject those obligations, so inviolate shall I still esteem them, that I here swear never to accept the addresses of any other man as long as Alford lives."

"Oh! Mariamne, (exclaimed Augustus,) your rigid virtue compels me to admire, even while I suffer by its decrees. Think not that I ever can forego my love, which is now one with my existence itself; but I will imitate your superior elevation of soul so far as to banish myself from your presence, and relinquish all claim to your affections: farther than this to promise, exact not from me. However be assured, your conjugal happiness with Alford shall never sustain an interruption through any indiscretion of mine."

Here Lady Derrick, who had sat a distressed spectator of the foregoing scene, could no longer repress her emotions; bursting anew into a flood of tears, she threw her arms tenderly around them both, and said, "I thank you both, my beloved children, for the pleasure you have this hour bestowed on me; pleasure, surpassing all I have ever experienced. To find you thus nobly resolving on sacrificing inclination to rectitude and reason, transports me beyond myself. I would applaud such heroic conduct, but words are inadequate to my sense of its value. Go, my noble children, be virtue

your reward ; and doubt not but it will be so. The happiness resulting from the gratification of the passions is temporary at best ; but that which arises from the consciousness of having obeyed the eternal obligations of moral rectitude, is permanent, and mocks the power of time."

Then most affectionately embracing them, her Ladyship, in consideration of their present feelings, proposed to Augustus to withdraw. He immediately arose for that purpose, but hesitated to stir, as though desirous of bidding a last adieu to her whom he could not cease to love. To prevent the distress which would thereby have been revived with aggravation in each of their bosoms, Lady Derrick, taking him by the arm, requested he would attend her for a few moments to the next room.

" In pity to you both, (said she, as soon as they were alone,) I have prevented the painful ceremony of bidding adieu to each other. Trifle not, my dear Augustus, with your own feelings as those of Mariamne ; attempt not to see her ; but if you are really in earnest in the generous sacrifice you have just made, retire from the castle. Human nature, my beloved nephew, is frail, and the stability of our virtuous purposes sometimes depends on flight."

He

He replied with a sigh, that it was his resolution to return to his father's seat immediately, though before his departure he wished to see Alford, in order to assure him that no sparks of resentment or desire of supplanting him remained in his breast.— This intention her Ladyship applauded, and he accordingly set out for the Doctor's house. The first person he saw was the Doctor himself, who as yet had seen none of the family at the Castle since the rencontre so fatal to all their peace. Augustus approached him with an air of diffidence; and the good man groaned deeply as he silently extended his hand towards him.

"Is it possible, Sir, you can yet receive me with cordiality?" said Obrien, affected at the tender manner in which he shook him by the hand.

"Are you then conscious of any reason why I should not do so, Augustus?" answered the Doctor with a mild and friendly accent.

"Ah, Sir, am not I the very person who has destroyed your peace of mind?"

"Partly, indeed, you answer that description; but I believe you had no malevolent design, and therefore the event is not chargeable to your account. As long as the present condition of humanity continues, men will be subject to their passions, and the effects of those passions will often extend to rela-

relative connexions. That you should have imbibed an affection for Mariamne, has nothing in it wonderful or criminal; nor that my poor unhappy boy should have felt a jealousy of that affection is at all surprising. No, child, if I have in some measure outlived the vivacity of my own passions, I have candour enough to allow for those of youth; and had my son stopped here, I must have compassionated his feelings as the infirmity of human nature; but when he forsook the plain path which both reason and gratitude pointed out;—when, instead of cool remonstrance, he sought a murderous revenge, he from that hour became guilty. True, I suffer as a father, but I resent his conduct as a man; or rather let me say, as a minister of that religion whose laws he has grossly violated in more lights than one.”

“ Oh, Sir, be not thus severe on your son alone; surely I was equally culpable in closing with the method he had unfortunately adopted.”

“ You were, (somewhat sternly,) most certainly you were. The crimes of another can never be an excuse for our own; neither ought one man’s insensibility of his duty to inspire the same conduct in his neighbour. But tell me Augustus, since, as I am informed you meant not to return my son’s fire, what motive urged you to meet him on the vile occasion?”

“ I will most candidly. Bred up, as I was
was

was, with Mariamne, my heart imbibed the tenderest sentiments towards her long before I became conscious of the nature of them. At my return from St. Omers, I found the only woman whom my soul acknowledged as its supreme terrestrial object, about to become the wife of another. I was not base enough to avow my passion in such circumstances, nor did I ever indulge a thought inimical to Alford's peace. The unguarded expression which roused his resentment, was merely the impulse of a momentary sensation. My soul would have abhorred the idea of uttering a syllable which tended to alter Mariamne's resolution in his favour; nor did I reflect on the apparent impropriety I had committed till the evening on which I received the challenge: then, Sir, my heart smote me for the pain I had undesignedly occasioned to an honest mind. I thought it incumbent on me to atone for the injury I had done his peace: in a word, to give him the satisfaction he required."

"Therein (said the Doctor) you were wanting to your dignity, as a man. Were there no methods of exculpating yourself from my son's suspicions, but by offering him your life? The concession, let me tell you, was mean. Are you tamely to yield your life? at the command of any one, who, for a real or supposed injury, has audacity enough to demand it? I therefore repeat it, that

that in complying with a challenge, you were wanting to your dignity as a man. As a member of the social body, you are accountable for your conduct only to that body. Private injuries are public wrongs, and consequently compensation can justly be made only to that authority to whom the state has delegated the execution of its laws. You wrong your country by meanly offering to an individual that life which properly belongs not to yourself, but to the society of which you are a member."

"I think, Sir, (replied Augustus,) your mode of reasoning would have been effectual to deter me from either giving or accepting a challenge more, had not the present unhappy consequences impressed my mind with horror at the very idea of duelling."

"Then who knows, (resumed the Doctor, with an animated air,) but from hence good may be deduced from evil: be it so. I suffer chearfully the affliction which may happily be productive of important benefit to my beloved pupil. The hope of being instrumental to the good of others, is more than sufficient to balance all I have felt, or still may feel."

"Excellent man! (exclaimed Obrien,) were all like you, this world would soon become a paradise."

He then desired permission to visit Alford; but this the Doctor humanely opposed.

posed. "My poor unhappy son (said he) would prove an object too shocking to your feeling heart, Augustus; and perhaps the sight of you might rekindle those impetuous passions which have, I fear, totally destroyed his reason. Go, my dear child, and let the idea of Alford, the wretched lunatic, be instead of a thousand precepts, to warn you against giving the reins to your passions."

At that instant the ravings of the poor maniac resounded through the house; some parental tears stole down the Doctor's venerable cheek; and Augustus, pressing his hand, withdrew in haste, to conceal his own emotion.

C H A P. XIII.

AUGUSTUS reached his father's house just time enough to prevent their setting out for the castle, intending forcibly to take him from thence. The late rencontre, with all its circumstances, had been reported to them, and thrown both Mr. and Mrs. Obrien into the greatest consternation; not so much from apprehension for the safety of their son, as at the discovery now made of his attachment to Mariamne. On his arrival, his mother accosted him with an air of cruel insult.

"Your most obedient, Sir, (said she, courtesying sarcastically;) by what singular favour have we so soon the lover of the high-born, noble Mariamne, the rival of the plebeian Alford, the renowned champion of the pretty beggar? Has your illustrious princess condescended to——"

"Dear mother, (interrupted Augustus,) have the goodness to spare me. I am already sufficiently degraded in my own eyes"

"Be

"Be silent, Mrs. Obrien, (said his father;) this womanish clamour tends to no purpose. Leave the affair to me.—Augustus, we have never yet had cause to question your veracity; inform us, therefore, of the particulars of this affair, which occasions us so much affliction."

"I will obey my father with candour," answered he; and immediately related all that had happened in the most impartial manner, with a modest firmness avowing his regard for Mariamne, and concluded with the conversation which terminated his hopes at the moment it obliged him to reverence the magnanimity of her sentiments. His father heard him with calmness; but, incapable either of admiring the candour of his son, or feeling for the delicate distress he must have experienced in the conflict of inclination and honour, he turned his eyes reproachfully towards his lady and said,——

"Now, Madam, allow me to congratulate you on the glorious fruits of your schemes which you planned with so much profound wisdom and ingenious policy."

Stung to the quick by this piece of irony, Mrs. Obrien briskly retorted,—

"Don't forget, Sir, to pay due compliments to your own sagacity. If I proposed placing the young idiot at his aunt's, you may remember how agreeable the measure was to yourself, when you perceived how
charm-

charmingly it would save expences at home. Nay, you went far beyond me in address when you prevailed on Father Le Jellier to consent to the plan, by agreeing to secure him half of the fortune Augustus should in future inherit from his aunt."

Mr. Obrien, well knowing the bitterness of his wife's temper, whenever it happened to be provoked, prudently ordered Augustus to leave the room, lest in her fury he should gather hints not proper for him to understand. The dialogue was then pursued with increasing acrimony on both sides, till Father le Jellier happening to enter the room, by his presence silenced the angry pair. He soon pointed out to them the proper steps to be taken on the occasion.

"There is (said he) reason to fear that the mischief your imprudence has occasioned is not yet fully disclosed. Most probably, in forgetting the respect due to his birth, your son has also renounced his religious principles. Bring him, therefore, to the touchstone at once; insist on his marrying Lady Catharine without delay; and if he demurs, depend on it he is an heretic, and ought to be disinherited, as an alien to your blood."

This sage counsel was immediately adopted, as, indeed, they dared not offer any opposition, had they really been dissatisfied with the advice; but it is most likely, neither

ther of them had penetration enough to perceive, that patience and gentleness were the only means to be observed; for so precipitate a proposal of marriage at the present crisis could only tend to defeat the very purpose intended.

However, the young gentleman was accordingly summoned to the parlour, and there roughly upbraided with the meanness of his conduct in bestowing his affections on one whose origin was so very obscure.

"A girl, (added Mr. Obrien,) who must have perished, but for the mistaken charity of your aunt."

"A creature, (cried Mrs. Obrien,) of the very lowest extraction."

"An heretic, (rejoined le Jellier,) an outcast from the church's bosom, an alien from all her precious privileges."

"But an angel, Father le Jellier, (answered Augustus,) independently of them all."

"Hear him, hear him (in a rage,) Mr. and Mrs. Obrien, do hear your son despising our Holy Mother!"

"Have patience my good father, (said Mr. Obrien; the unhappy youth has been miserably deluded; but I trust we shall set all to rights.—Augustus, my son, listen to me. It is true, you have disgraced your noble pedigree by deigning so much as to notice the girl whom your mistaken aunt

has foolishly brought up in her family ; but, in compassion of your youth and inexperience, we consent to overlook your indiscretions, provided you are inclined to give proof of your better judgment. You are not ignorant that Lady Catherine Macauley is by birth your equal, by fortune your superior : she condescends to profess some very favourable sentiments towards you ; and therefore, from a tender regard to your happiness, I have agreed to overtures of alliance between the families."

"What, Sir, have you proposed me as a match for Lady Catharine?"

"I have, and hope you are not insensible of the honour she is inclined to bestow on you."

"Sir, I should be insensible to the honour of any alliance in the present state of my mind."

"Except (interrupted his mother, with malicious smile) it were with Mariamne."

"I have told you, Madam, that I have relinquished all views of that nature."

"Then wherefore (resumed Mr. O'Brien,) do you hesitate in complying with my measures?"

"Because, my honoured Sir, I feel at this time a repugnance to the idea of marriage ; and farther, Lady Catharine is not a person by any means to my taste."

"You refuse, then, to marry her?"

"Since

"Since my father insists on my real sentiments, I am compelled to say I do."

"Very well, Sir, then I reduce you to that condition which best befits your ignoble mind: I will disinherit you; you shall be a beggar."

"Will my father permit me to say a few words?"

"Hear him not, (cried le Jellier;) his principles are corrupted; he is no longer your son."

Augustus now perceiving the tide of passion ran high, respectfully bowed and withdrew; after which a solemn council was held respecting the mode of treating the refractory youth. Le Jellier insisted that nothing but the most severe means could possibly reclaim him to his duty; and after some farther discourse on the subject, the submissive parents implicitly agreed to resign the management of their son entirely to him.

The priest, who had the true spirit of an inquisitor, prepared to enter on the post assigned him. A remote apartment was got ready, the windows of which were ordered to be grated in the manner of a prison, double locks fastened on the door, and a whisp of straw in one corner was placed by way of a bed. All things being thus prepared, the culprit was conveyed to the place of confinement, and carefully secured by means of

the double locks, the keys of which remained in the hands of the cruel Le Jellier, who was the only person which entered henceforth the dreary apartment, and this only once a-day, to carry food to his prisoner; then he never failed to load him with sarcastic taunts and bitter reproaches, to all which Augustus answered only by contemptuous silence. The weather was then very cold, yet they allowed him no fire nor candle to amuse the horrors of his dismal solitude: but, though arbitrary severity might sometimes terrify the ignoble mind to submission, it must have a contrary effect on a generous one. Such was now the case with Augustus; endowed by nature with a soul capable of every noble and amiable feeling, the idea of being treated as a slave, was sufficient to rouse a warm and permanent resentment, and, in short, to defeat every purpose aimed at by so impolitic and severe a treatment. Superior to every selfish consideration, and possessing an ample fund of native generosity and filial reverence, it is probable he would have conceded every thing to the peace of a tender and kind father; but the parental character was now lost in that of a gloomy, cruel tyrant; and once treated as a slave, he disdained submission, which could no longer bear the name of duty so much as the timid concession of a mean, unworthy soul, especially

cially as he had sufficient ground to conclude the treatment he received, as well as the sacrifice required of him, were the result of Le Jellier's arbitrary principles, whose character he had long detested. He had ever regarded Lady Catharine as a trifling, worthless woman, who possessed not one qualification, which, in his idea, was requisite in a wife; but, besides a negative disapprobation, he was convinced her heart was naturally a bad one, and therefore, though the object of his dislike, and ever would have been so, had Mariamne never existed, she was now become an object so intimately connected with his present sufferings, that he could not think of her without horror. Had Le Jellier been at all acquainted with the natural workings of an honest, noble mind, he must have foreseen that all this would be the certain consequences of so impolitic a conduct as he had chosen to adopt. But his own narrow illiberal soul could give him no intimations of the kind; and accustomed as a priest to exercise the most arbitrary power over the blind votaries of superstition, he had no conception that any one over whom he was suffered to exert an authority could possibly prove refractory to his measures.

One week had now elapsed, and Le Jellier thought it time to prove the success of his measures: entering, therefore, the prison

with an air of rather less austerity than usual, he thus addressed his prisoner :—

“ Well, Sir, it is now a week since you have learned to experience what it is to contemn a father’s authority; tell me, therefore, if your proud spirit be sufficiently tamed to allow you to think of making concession.”

“ I know (answered Augustus) that with you implicit obedience and non-resistance are incontrovertible principles; but, as I never will act otherwise than from conviction, pray inform me wherein lie the grounds of a child’s obedience to his parents.”

“ Wherein? Why—wherein? Is it not absolutely commanded?”

“ I know it is; but, as every other of the sacred commands is founded in moral fitness, and perfectly congenial to right reason, I suppose this is also: therefore, as a divine, you doubtless can clearly inform me of the nature of this social obligation.”

“ To be sure I can. Parents are to be obeyed, because they are parents, and because it is commanded.”

“ That reason is not satisfactory to me, Father; and though the ministers of religion forbid free enquiry into the grounds of injunction, their Master does not; I have therefore much considered this subject during the leisure you kindly allow me, and the result of my reflections is this: A parent
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can reasonably claim no gratitude from his child for the being he has given him, except he also endeavours to make it a well-being. Now, in those endeavours are implied all the duties of a parental character, which both reason and natural instinct enjoin; and they consist, first, in a due regard to the wants and necessities of animal life, during the period in which the offspring is incapable of procuring them; secondly, in forming the mind to such principles of religion and virtue, as enable the being he has produced to fill his station in society with happiness to himself and others; thirdly, in such instances of counsel, friendship, and assistance, as tend to the comfortable establishment of a child in life, whereby he may bear an honourable and useful part in the society of which he is a member, and in the due discharge and reciprocation of relative duties, become conscious of his happiness and importance as a rational being. Now, Sir, the parent thus acquitting himself of duties which are instinctively taught by nature, and therefore not necessarily the subject of a moral precept, has a claim to all the love, gratitude, and reverence of a child to whom he has given well-being. Obedience, in this case, becomes a reasonable service; and the duty thus enjoined, presupposing love, wisdom, and equity on the parent's side, is an obligation adapted to
moral

moral fitness, calculated for the honour and happiness of both parent and child. But now, should there be a failure of the prior obligation —”

“ I perfectly understand your inference, Sir, (interrupted Le Jellier, wrathfully,) and find you are a better philosopher than christian. These are the sweet fruits of the Castle education? Cursed heretic! However, we shall put your principles to such a test, as I fancy your sceptical fortitude will not well support. But as a friend, I ask —”

“ Profane not that character. Be yourself the narrow-minded tyrant, and I will answer you.”

“ Well, Sir, the narrow-minded tyrant, then, demands whether you will accept your father's terms of liberation. This moment you shall be released, on condition of marrying Lady Catharine.”

“ And to this I reply, that while heaven and earth endure, I will never marry that woman.”

Le Jellier abruptly withdrew, gnashing his teeth as he went out. He was now more confirmed in a suspicion which he had admitted some time before, namely, that Augustus was secretly inclined to the protestant faith; and this reflection augmented his bitter spirit to a revenge not far remote from diabolical. He therefore meditated

on

on adding some bodily tortures to the confinement already allotted the offender; but recollecting that he was not in a catholic country, and that the British laws were superior to church prerogative, he was forced to content himself with diminishing the quantity of food hitherto allowed him. Till now his food had been of the best, and the quantity unlimited; but from henceforth a piece of dry bread of about half an ounce weight, and a small glass of water, were the only subsistence daily allowed the son and heir of the Obrien family. It is probable that this part of the sentence would have been mitigated, had the father or mother been acquainted with it; but as they were neither inclined or permitted to visit him, Le Jellier exerted his utmost rigour during the space of a fortnight longer, at which time it was found, that, though no efforts of tyranny can conquer the free-born mind, yet the body may be subdued by its effects. Augustus's constitution, though remarkably good, was unequal to so rigid a course of abstinence; it was visibly impaired; his countenance was lean and pale, his body almost a skeleton; yet still he continued as far from yielding as Le Jellier was from pitying. In fact, he perceived the ravages which famine was gradually making on his animal frame with no displeasing sensations, and believed the hour to be now approach-
ing

ing which should remove him from a world with which he had so much cause to be disgusted.

The father, all this time, felt not one compassionate sensation. — One morning, however, going as usual with the poor pittance of bread and water, he found his poor emaciated prisoner lying almost lifeless on his bed of straw ; it was therefore time to look to his own safety ; Augustus's death might be laid to his door ; and though a priest, heretics might pay so little respect to that character, as to compel him to atone for it by his own. In the greatest consternation, he immediately apprised Obrien of his son's condition, affirming also that he had stubbornly refused all food, till his life was in danger.

The young gentleman was immediately conveyed to another apartment, and exchanged his whisp of straw for a bed of down ; but, in spite of all their care now assiduously applied, he seemed too far gone for recovery. Le Jellier, believing him actually expiring, discovered great concern for the state of his soul, and would have performed such pious ceremonies as the Romish church supposes of the last importance to dying persons. But Augustus, who was perfectly sensible, absolutely refused every thing of the kind.

“ Ah !

"Ah! my son, (cried the priest, with tears,) would you then die an heretic?"

"I would die an infidel, rather than such a christian as you are, Le Jellier."

"Then be perdition thy doom," exclaimed the Father, who, now released from the fear of being accused as a murderer, felt all his rancour re-kindle, and even exulted secretly in having destroyed one of the church's enemies. Most certain it is, that, had it rested with the good priest, Augustus had soon been numbered with the dead. But Mrs. Obrien, urged by maternal impulse, determined on not quitting his bedside for a moment: and as nutritive aliment was all which exhausted nature required to resume her former functions, she was too anxious a nurse to omit the proper remedy. His healthful constitution gradually surmounted the shock it had received, but not so entirely, but that a languor still hung about him, probably the effect of some solid remembrances, he found it impossible to erase.

Mr. and Mrs. Obrien, seriously alarmed, thought proper to desist from farther importunity on a subject to which he still assured them he could never listen with complaisance; and as Mariamne, they supposed, would shortly be married to Alford, they now stopped exactly at the point they ought in common sense to have set out from, namely,

namely, by resolving to leave it to time to effect such a change as they wished in the sentiments of their son. They had thoughts of giving him permission to travel, to which proposal Father le Jellier gave a kind of sullen assent. " You may send him to France, or where else you list, (said he ;) your son is unworthy of you ; an ungracious boy, who will do you no credit ; I say he will do you no credit. Let him go wherever he has a mind ; you ought not to bestow a thought on him."

Augustus, therefore, to his great satisfaction, had permission to make a tour on the Continent. Before he left Ireland, he dispatched a few lines to the Castle, informing Lady Derrick of his intention of being abroad some years, and earnestly wishing happiness to all her family, but carefully avoiding a particular mention of Mariamne, or of the sufferings he had undergone ; and, indeed, so carefully were these concealed, even from the servants of the family, that her Ladyship never knew of the unworthy treatment her beloved nephew had received in the house of his father.

CHAP. XIV.

DURING the severe probation of Augustus, Mariamne had recovered her usual health; and if not her entire peace of mind, at least as great a share of tranquillity as could reasonably be expected. She had never suffered herself to make any enquiries after Augustus, nor even to mention his name; and she now heard that he was gone to France with much satisfaction.

Alford's madness had happily proved but temporary; for some time his reason had seemed to be established; but he was sunk into a melancholy, from which no efforts could rouse him; and the agitation of his mind visibly affected his health. The Doctor, who at length resumed fortitude sufficient to visit his noble friend and partner in affliction, Lady Derrick, never saw Mariamne but with a tender sympathy, which expressed how dear her happiness was in his esteem.

One day, when, with more than usual pathos, she lamented to him the event which

had given so deep a wound to the peace of those she tenderly loved, he bade her be comforted, assuring her that he could find throughout the sad affair no one to blame but his son.

"Had he (pursued the good man) substituted calm expostulation, in the place of barbarous temerity, he had known that Augustus held a priority in Mariamne's affection. And yet (musing) since your life is happily spared, all is right; but for this event, my child, you had sacrificed your peace for ever, and become the wife of one whom you loved not. Oh! Mariamne, believe me, I love you so well, as to rejoice in the discovery, though my poor Tom suffers, and, I fear, will ever suffer."

"Then I fear (weeping) I shall appear in a contemptible light, to my most honoured preceptor, by what I was about to say."

"No, child, I am so well assured of the rectitude and purity of your soul, that nothing you can say will force me to think unfavourably of you: open, therefore, your mind."

"This, then, Sir, I would say:—Were there no prudential reasons why I could never be the wife of Augustus, I would prefer the claims of your son."

"Have a care, child, how you think it expedient

expedient to disguise your sentiments with one who loves you so tenderly as I do."

"Nor did I mean to disguise them, my dear Sir. My affections, by the dictates of an imprudent passion, I confess are Augustus's; by those of reason, virtue, and honour, they are Alford's. These last, it is my duty to obey: nay more, it will be my happiness——"

"What, Mariamne, would you consent to marry my son?"

"Cordially, if you and that son reject me not; nor do I doubt, but in the triumph of reason, to experience more solid and permanent satisfaction than could arise from any successful passion."

"My noble girl, (embracing her with ardour,) how exalted is this sentiment!—Blessings reward you for it."

"This (cried Lady Derrick) is even beyond my hopes." My precious Mariamne, take my warmest thanks. All will be well at last."

"It was not, however, thought expedient, that an interview between the young people should yet take place, till the health of both should be better able to encounter those feelings which such an interview must naturally excite. But Alford's health was destined never to be established. He daily grew worse, and at length sunk so rapidly into a deep decline, as to be incapable of

quitting his chamber. Mariamne entreated, nay, insisted on seeing him, though she herself had not yet left her room. Her request was complied with. She was conveyed to Alford's chamber, who, pale and emaciated, sat reclined in an easy chair. At her entrance, pleasure seemed to sparkle in his languid eyes, and a faint glow animated his cheek. He would have arisen, but strength was denied him. Mariamne, with an amiable frankness, placed her chair close to his. She would have spoke, but burst involuntarily into tears. Lady Derrick secretly repented of having allowed an interview so affecting to them both. Alford, however, was the first to speak: he thanked her for honouring him with her presence, and begged forgiveness for the alarming consequences of his late guilty rashness.

"Do not, Alford, adopt such strains as those, which I consider as the bitterest reproach. Who is the really injured person? Yourself. And who culpable but me? If, therefore, (tenderly embarrassed,) the contrition—the attentions of a whole life——"

Lady Derrick feeling for her delicate distress, kindly arose; and taking the hand of Mariamne, presented it to Alford.

"This, Alford, (said her Ladyship,) is your's, and only your's. Mariamne presents it as an act of obliteration of the past; and I think you are so well persuaded of her integrity

integrity, as to indulge no scruples in accepting the hand which she herself offers."

Joy sparkled in his countenance. He pressed her hand with ardour to his lips.

"I should be utterly unworthy the inestimable favour, (replied he,) were I capable of doubting Mariamne's truth for one moment. This dear hand is its sacred pledge. I ask of Heaven only life to testify my gratitude, as well as my penitence, for the past."

The Doctor advanced with tears of joy. He folded his arms around both.

"Blessings, (exclaimed he,) blessings light richly on you both; be long happy in each other. And you, my boy, will surely never forget this virtuous sacrifice, but by a life of tenderness repay it."

But the feelings of Alford were too exquisite for his present feeble frame to support: he sunk back in the chair. At length he opened his eyes once more; they beamed gratitude and unutterable love on Mariamne. Nature could no longer sustain the weight of bliss pressing at his heart; the film of death overspread the visual orbs, and in a moment of ecstasy, with a smile of ineffable transport, he expired.

C H A P. XV.

THE sun had just begun to dart its rising beams on the ivy-crowned turrets of the Castle, when the remains of the unfortunate Alford were conveyed to their last home. By his own desire, (some weeks before his death,) he was buried in a retired part of the church yard beneath an old yew tree, whose venerable foliage he was wont from a child to admire. Six young men supported the pall. His sword, buckler, and fusil lay on the coffin. Mariamne herself, closely veiled, followed the corpse, resolute in paying that last token of respect to an unfortunate youth; but she fainted at the grave, and was borne insensible from a scene too affecting for her feelings. The melancholy event was supported by the Doctor with a fortitude consistent indeed with his character, but not imitable by the generality of fond parents. But he had long learned to look beyond the sublunary scene of

of things; he had long taught all the faculties of his soul the grand palliative of human sorrow,—religious resignation; and now, though bereaved of an only son, the pride, the honour, and hopes of his declining years, he bent in meek submission to the awful decree, nor suffered himself once to doubt but that all was right as thus ordained.

But the susceptible bosom of Lady Derrick possessed not a like tranquillity. Tho' possessing a piety equally genuine and ardent, she could not with fortitude witness the calamity which a few months had brought on her family. In her exquisite sensibility, of which Dr. Alford's severe misfortune was especially included, she felt that good man's sorrows without being able to imitate his fortitude; and when she reflected that the unfortunate connexion which produced it was partly owing to herself, her feelings were most severe.

"I thought, (exclaimed she,) by promoting that measure, to have secured my Mariamne's happiness, whilst I also proved my respect for the Alford family; but fate has otherwise decreed. I lament my conduct at the very moment my heart triumphs in the consciousness of integrity and benevolence. It is possible, I find, for the generous mind to suffer by its ardour in facilitating the felicity of others."

Mariamne's

Mariamne's condition was in the last degree pitiable. The circumstances of Alford's death gave a shock to her feelings, which they could not easily recover. It had happened, at the period when she had bravely resolved to surmount the weakness of a too susceptible heart, and to snatch at happiness by the nobler triumph of reason and honour, the late sad and unexpected event had dissipated the gay hopes which a virtuous imagination had so pleasingly drawn; she saw affliction heavily pressing on the hearts of all those she held dear, and herself precluded from the possibility of alleviating them; but, though her distress was exquisite, she suffered in silence, not permitting one tender complaint to escape her, lest it might augment the sorrows of her friends; but, though she outwardly assumed the air of tranquility as much as possible, her pensive sighs would sometimes involuntarily escape, and her pale countenance too well betrayed the condition of her mind. More, therefore, on Mariamne's account than her own, Lady Derrick determined on quitting for a time the place where every scene served but to reflect the idea of past events. She determined on visiting the city of Bath, whose medicinal springs and various amusements might be attended with happy effects on the health and spirits of both. She would have prevailed on the Doctor to accompany them,

them, but this he declined, alledging the impropriety of his leaving his people : but though this excuse was suggested by a real regard for his pastoral care, he had yet another reason for declining the invitation, namely, accustomed, as he was, to trace all human calamity up to a higher source than second causes, he embraced the affliction allotted him as a salutary potion sent by a Divine Friend. He wished not to lighten his sense of it by changing the scene, but rather chose to brood over his misfortunes in solitude, while his feelings as a father and a man were tempered by the pious heroism of a christian. Tenderly considering, however, that the complexion of minds differs as much as the outward form, he strenuously urged the departure of the two ladies, from the conviction that the measure would be salutary to them both.

Lady Derrick was now about to quit her Castle for the first time during fifteen years past, and to be absent from it also a considerable time. The very thought was distressing, not only to those of her own household, but to every inhabitant throughout the village, who all respected her Ladyship as their tutelary angel. The loss of her presence was to them the loss of their chief good.

On the evening preceding the journey, she took an affectionate leave of all her domestics.

domestics who were summoned to the parlour one by one. Thanking them for the fidelity they had severally displayed in her service, she recommended unanimity amongst them till her return.

"You John, (said she, addressing the old house-steward,) will be a sort of father to these my honest servants during my absence. See that they want nothing conducive to their welfare and comfort."

"I will, I will do my best, (sobbed the honest grey-headed domestic,) but I wish, though, for all——"

"What do you wish, John?"

"That your Ladyship would not go to England."

"And wherefore that wish?"

"Because, an' please your Ladyship, I have been told the English doctors never let their patients come home alive till they have fairly killed them."

Her ladyship could not forbear smiling at her faithful steward's hibernianism, but kindly assured him she would take care of that, and doubted not of a safe return to her family.

The next morning as the two ladies proceeded to their carriage, they found the hall through which they were to pass filled with the whole household, ranged on either side. They were every one suffused in tears; and she extended her hand to them as she passed, they

they implored for their honoured Lady a happy return. Mariamne also partook of their cordial wishes : she was beloved by the whole family. The poor villagers in particular were interested in her welfare. To them she was an active friend, not only in dispensing to them Lady Derrick's bounty, but in administering, by her own personal assiduity, to the necessities of their peculiar situations, softening the pillow of sickness, and comforting the decrepitude of age ; in a word, alleviating, as far as possible, the condition of humanity.

C H A P. XVI.

LADY DERRICK and her suite safely landed at Holyhead, and from thence, by easy stages, reached the city of Bath, where the season was just then commencing. Our heroine now found herself moving in a very different sphere from that to which she had been hitherto accustomed. Derrick Castle and its environs had till this period comprehended the whole of this terrestrial globe which she had seen, at least since the time of her infancy; of course, all appeared new and surprising; nothing could be more striking than was the transition from the solitude and stillness of her Ladyship's family to the excessive hurry of a Bath scene.

But whether she was charmed or not with the change, it is certain that she was now become an object of universal attention, and never did that meridian of pleasure display a more striking luminary. Mariamne's person was rather above the common standard, and formed with the exactest symmetry.

Her

Her air was graceful, yet commanding; and there was about her so much of dignity, that it was impossible to behold her with common sensations. Her face was beautiful; every feature bespoke regularity: her eyes full of fire; and tresses of dark brown shaded one of the finest complexions ever beheld.

The first time of her appearance in public, furnished the beau monde with an exhaustless topic of conversation. "Who is this phaenomenon of beauty? What is she?" — The tongue of envy was, however, restrained from making such animadversions as it would have dictated, by the character of Lady Derrick, whose family was generally known and respected; and as Mariamne was known by no other appellation than that of Miss Derrick, which it was her Ladyship's desire she should assume, she was commonly supposed to be some near relation, and consequently received from all ranks the respect due to so illustrious a connection. But if in public she had caught the admiring eye, the social circle was no less the scene in which she shone with peculiar advantage. Having received every assistance which education could give to the finest natural abilities, her manners were elegant, and her conversation interesting and refined. Though bred in retirement, she had nothing of that awkward bashfulness which so frequently distinguishes young persons

who have been unused to the polite world. She displayed all the requisite freedom of a polite education, without any of its affected graces and ridiculous frivolities.

Such was Mariamne when she became an universal toast, and was constantly followed by a train of admirers. But her heart was insensible to their assiduous endeavours,—their rival attentions to obtain her favour. She shunned adulation as industriously as many seek it, and preferred the social private circle to the glitter of a gay and crowded ball-room.

Among those who visited Lady Derrick, was a Major M'Kenzie, a gentleman somewhere about fifty years of age, of a respectable family in Scotland, and a man of a most valuable character; shrewd and penetrating, yet candid; too proud to sooth the vicious, or humour the capricious, yet humble enough to respect modest merit, however obscure, and possessing so much urbanity of temper as rendered him to those he liked the most polite of mankind. Qualities so estimable pointed him out to Lady Derrick as a very eligible visitant; he was therefore their frequent companion at home, and their 'squire to all public places: nor was it long before she discovered that his attentions to Mariamne were of a very particular kind; not that his behaviour to her had any thing of the fawning lover, but rather

ther the warm friend ; yet that friendship certainly expressed something peculiarly tender.

Mariamne appeared equally pleased with the Major. It was observed she turned in disgust from the profuse compliments, the flattery of the younger gentlemen, to listen to Major M'Kenzie, and every thing was right which he did and said. Perhaps one ground of this partiality was his being able to entertain her on a subject which she yet felt grateful to her ear. He was lately returned from Italy, and had there made acquaintance with Augustus, whom he spoke of in very high terms,—expatiated warmly on his character, both as a scholar and a gentleman,—said how greatly he was respected by the foreign nobility. “ In short, Madam, (to Lady Derrick,) your nephew is an honour to his country.”

One part of his intelligence was more pleasing to Lady Derrick than to Mariamne. The Major told them of a Marquis Ferazzi, in whose family Augustus was well received, and of an only daughter of this nobleman who was the admiration of all Milan ; intimating that the young lady was suspected of entertaining very tender sentiments towards the Irish Cavalier, which the Mariuqs, her father, inclined also to favour.

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"But what are my nephew's sentiments?" said Lady Derrick.

"He thinks very highly of the lady, Madam. Once, I remember, on my rallying him on the subject, he told me he thought her the most faultless woman he had ever met with, except one."

Mariamne's cheeks flushed a deep crimson; but recollecting that the Major knew nothing of her story, she quickly recovered the emotion, and heard him thus proceed:

"Whether that one, whoever she be, has power to render him absolutely insensible to the attractions of Lady Camilla, I can't say; this, however, I know, that the fault will be on his side alone, if he succeeds not to the noble fortune of the house of Ferazzi."

"I wish he may be sensible of the honour," replied Lady Derrick.

Mariamne thought it the severest thing she had ever heard drop from her Ladyship's lips. A moment's recollection however, set her right in her commentary. She reflected that Augustus could never be any thing to her;—that he certainly concluded that by this time she was the wife of another. Lady Derrick had the happiness of both in view by the wish she had just uttered; and she would cordially have united in that wish, had not her heart discovered some secret reluctance to accord with it.

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However, she acquitted her Ladyship, and strove to banish the subject from her thoughts.

It is here necessary to observe, that Lady Derrick's health was by this time so much mended, that Marianne was enabled to write in the following terms to Dr. Alford.

' I have the happiness, most dear and
' honoured Sir, to inform you, that my
' kind benefactress has found the happiest
' effects by the air and waters of this city:
' I think I never knew her Ladyship's
' health better than it seems to be at present. The pleasure this intelligence will
' afford you, I am well aware of, and therefore it is that I am impatient to write
' by the first post after the receipt of your's.

' Ah, my dear Sir, how kind, how tender is that letter with which you have
' favoured your unworthy pupil; what encouragement do you give to a distressed
' heart, ready at times to sink under the weight of its own reflections; what a
' veil do you draw over its weakness, though by that weakness you suffer; but
' your goodness has often prohibited that reflection. You command me to be
' cheerful for your sake. Is it possible you can derive comfort from Marianne
' more? Exalted sufferer! Then, Sir, my
poor

‘ poor endeavours shall be exerted to promote that comfort by every possible act of filial love and duty. Your’s indeed, I am; since, but for your cares, I had not survived that tempest which I have often since wished had buried me in its bosom. But you have convinced me of the impiety of those murmurs; and when I see you, Sir, struggling with sorrows sufficient to break a heart of less sensibility than your own, I revere,—I would imitate the pious magnanimity. I perceive I ought to value the gift of life, were it only to repay, by my thanks at least, the unspeakable tenderness of that invaluable lady, who is pleased to say, her happiness depends on me.

‘ Impressed by a sense of such goodness, I strive to be cheerful. O, long may she live to hear the orphan her charity has nurtured express a grateful recollection of her beneficence; and may the day yet arrive when my beloved preceptor shall forget his sorrows in the dutious cares of his fond and grateful

‘ MARIAMNE.”

Suppressing her private feelings, she was apparently cheerful, and a partaker of all public amusements, not so much from inclination, as a readiness to comply with the kind

kind requests of Lady Derrick, who supposed it a probable means of beguiling the too-serious reflections of her favourite ; but though from this motive she gave into that round of gaiety which her Ladyship, with the kindest views, prescribed her, her heart was far from being interested in any of those dissipated scenes. The Major frequently observed her absence of mind on such occasions, which he mistook for an elevation of taste superior to the trifling amusements of the age ; and the belief increased his veneration of her character. though, in return to such compliments, she always assured him her indifference was rather the effect of dulness than superiority of discernment.

At length the Major informed her Ladyship, that he was obliged to resign the satisfactions he had experienced in her society and that of Mariamne, it being necessary he should go to Scotland on some urgent affairs ; but as he parted from them with regret, he would console himself with the prospect of seeing them in Ireland before the expiration of the summer. They took a polite, and even friendly, leave of each other, in the expectation of improving, at some future time, the friendship, which this short acquaintance seemed to have begun.

